

DISTRICT 11 BOARD MEETING
February 13, 2026
2026 Indianapolis Regional
DRAFT

In attendance:

Officers – Billie Brown, President; Maribeth Ransel, Vice President; Steve Moese, Secretary; Potter Orr, Treasurer.

Voting Members - **Unit 122** Tom Bishel, Janelle Courtright; **Unit 124** Jim Barrett; **Unit 130** Susan Spickelmier; Marsha Callahan; **Unit 136** Ellen Holroyd, Bob Stitt; **Unit 193** Jeffrey Chapman, Roxi Witt; Education Coordinator Bill Brewer.

Absent: **Unit 117** Dotty Losey, Bill Cook; **Unit 124** James Danziger; **Unit 164** Ken Katen, Susan Bullard; **GNT/NAP Coordinator.** Ryan Schultz,

Next Board Meeting is in Cincinnati on Thursday June 11, 2026 after the 2nd session.

CALL TO ORDER – by President Billie Brown at 10:02 AM EST.

President Billie Brown welcomed alternates, visitors and new board members Ellen Holroyd Unit 136 and Roxi Witt Unit 193. On behalf of the Board Billie thanked Bob Zangri Unit 136 and Bill Lea Unit 193 for their service. Billie mentioned that all Board documents for the meeting are in the D11 Google Drive (these documents are for Board members only). As always members should have these key links bookmarked in their browser for future reference.

Secretary Steve Moese confirmed a quorum was present.

President Billie Brown reminded everyone to address the chair to be recognized, that only voting members are eligible to make motions and to cast votes, and that the meeting will be recorded (audio) with the recording published to the google drive and the draft minutes to the website. Billie also reminded those present about the best way to make and second a motion. No additions were offered to the agenda.

MINUTES – The Board approved the November 7, 2025 Louisville/Lexington minutes by unanimous consent.

President Billie Brown reminded the Board to review Unit updates on the Google Drive.

PRESIDENT’S REPORT

President Billie Brown reaffirmed D11 Priorities: grow in-person bridge, grow bridge classes, support our tournaments, and improve retention and recruiting members. Billie shortened her President Report

NEW BUSINESS

Dayton-Evansville Board Meeting

Bob Stitt Unit 136 proposed we have a zoom meeting for the August Split Regional Board Meeting. Ellen Holroyd Unit 136 can provide the zoom link. The Board agreed to 7:30 to 9:30 PM ET on Thursday August 20, 2026. Billie and Tom Bishel Unit 122 confirmed that the schedule for both parts of the split regional is firm.

Discussion on Regional Entry Fee Guidance to Units.

James Barrett Unit 124 (and James Danziger in absentia) requested a higher range for future regionals. Costs for space are rising. Cincinnati faces an annual increase in rent. The current guidance is \$15 to \$17 and everyone is at \$17. If the price is printed on the flyer, either the flyer changes or the price stays as advertised. The District does

not impose the entry fee on the Units running the tournament. Our guidance is aimed to avoid price competition

MOTION: Ellen Holroyd Unit 136 **SECOND:** Jim Barrett Unit 124

Effective January 1, 2027 the District strongly encourages the entry fee range for Regional events to be \$17-20. Passed Unanimously.

with one another.

District 11 Award Certificates and Recognition – Maribeth Ransel, Vice President

Maribeth shared her proposal for recognizing District winners for the Mini-McKenney, Ace of Clubs, and Virtual Ace of Clubs. She also proposed a traveling poster that updates before each tournament displaying the NAP and GNT qualifiers, Major Masterpoint rank achievement, and other D11 wide bridge accomplishments. The Vice President shall be responsible for managing the D11 Recognition process. The Poster board will move tournament-to-tournament and be displayed prominently in the playing area. Maribeth demonstrated the tri-fold prototype poster she designed. The board agreed enthusiastically. Steve Moese (webmaster) agreed to send Maribeth pictures of the NAP qualifiers. Maribeth will add the website URL to the poster.

Maribeth will send D11 Certificates to the winners electronically.

MOTION: Jim Barrett Unit 124 **SECOND:** Tom Bishel Unit 122

Approve the Proposal for the District 11 Rewards and Recognition approach, and amend the D11 Standing Rules so that the D11 Vice President is responsible for managing the D11 Rewards and Recognition process. Passed Unanimously.

Ellen Holroyd Unit 136 – having someone help with meaningful communication is excellent.

There was a brief mention of the Charity and Goodwill awards. Steve Moese will follow up on their status with Larry Sealy.

2027-28 D11 Election Committee

Chair Billie Brown asked for volunteers. The committee polls the board for candidates for president, vice-president, secretary to serve for the two-year period beginning January 1, 2027. The treasurer is appointed. Our current Vice President and President are term-limited and cannot be re-elected. We need one volunteer per unit for a total of 3.

James Barrett Unit 124, Roxi Witt Unit 193, and Susan Spickelmier Unit 130 are the committee.

5/5/5 REPORTS

Jeff Chapman described the plusses for Units about the 5/5/5 rebate program. 5/5/5 incentivizes Units to actively work recruiting and retention. The ACBL provides tools and a quarterly report that is summarized on the D11 homepage.

Bill Brewer mentioned the “Return to the Fold” spreadsheet and how it facilitates doing the recruiting and retention work.

BOOST PROGRAM

Bill Brewer – Education Chair report

Bill discussed how clubs are promoting face-to-face games including the value of mentor-mentee games. F2F games tie to membership. Bob Stitt used BOOST successfully but it is hard to get into BOOST. Siraj Haji (Columbus) and Bill are planning Facebook campaigns in their respective club areas to recruit new prospects.

They are investing their own advertising funds. Focus will be on empty nesters (who play bridge at home). Marsha Callahan Unit 130 suggested that Bill invites all units to participate. Steve explained that Siraj and Bill are investing in their clubs. This is not a Unit-level activity. All clubs can do this. Bill and Siraj can offer them the benefit of their experience.

Bob Stitt Unit 136 – Dayton has had great success with BOOST. In March, we are recruiting without BOOST to see what the difference is. He mentioned a problem with ACBL responsiveness to getting the summary report back from the ACBL. We can't start a new BOOST program until the ACBL sends back the follow-up report. We have to contact them to get the report. Wednesday and Saturday morning classes are for new players. They are now moving to Tuesday and Fridays.

Bill Brewer mentioned that ACBL approval is not automatic. Success depends on having teacher engagement and a supportive process to transition new players to club games. Bill mentioned his Tuesday play-and-learn game where they play 18-21 boards and can ask questions at any time. Bill's Monday game has successfully transitioned people to enjoy stratified open games. Bill mentioned the mentor-mentee program in Cincinnati (32 MM Pairs). The secret sauce is to carefully match mentors and mentees. He emphasizes meeting the mentee where they are and not try to overwhelm them with conventions and theory.

Jim Barrett was pleasantly surprised at the large turnout – 12-13 tables per Sunday afternoon game. These experiences help new players feel less anxious about playing in open games.

Steve Moese mentioned the socialization benefits when new players play with flight A players. He also mentioned the example from Bridge winners about a club that uses MeetUp to bring interested people to play social bridge in a club space. The atmosphere is fluid and informal, so people come and go. The London experiment has attracted 1300 participants who will find their way to duplicate competition.

Bill Brewer mentioned that Unit 124 has about 730 members but only 30 – 40 with more than 1500 points. 400 have less than 300 masterpoints. We need to appeal to flight B&C players.

Janelle Courtwright Unit 122 – we have trouble getting mentors. How can we encourage new mentors?

Bill Brewer – we encourage people with 200-300 masterpoints to be mentors. Most of our mentors have under 1500 points. Mentors get free plays or discounts. The Sunday afternoon game runs 1-4 PM. We screen mentors.

D11 GRASS ROOTS FUND

Steve Moese presented Ryan Schultz's report to the Board.

The D11 GNT Finals are April 12, 2026. Pre-registration is required for Open and Flight A teams. The registration link is on the District 11 home page. Be sure to make all your players aware. If Open or Flight A have more than 4 teams, they will compete in a preliminary round on Saturday April 11, 2026. If fewer than 5 teams pre-register, then only 4 teams may compete on Sunday. Walk-ins will not be honored past 4 teams.

The D11 Grass Roots Fund (GRF) account supports stipends for NAP and GNT players from our District. Years ago, we had about \$20,000 in the GRF account. The annual contribution from the ACBL was in the neighborhood of \$7K-8K based on funds raised during GRF games in the District. The annual GRF contribution is now down to ~~\$2300~~ \$1256.69. The current fund balance is \$8,907.73 and will be insufficient by the end of 2026.

Sources of GRF are 1) Income from District 11 NAP and GNT finals, and 2) GRF contributions from club games and tournament GRF event.

D11 Finals GRF Income (NAP & GNT Finals combined): 2023 – \$135; 2024 – \$158; 2025 – \$1356

The increase in 2025 coincided with the increase in table fees in 2025. We expect to save an additional \$1000 from the shortened D11 GNT Finals when it runs only on Sunday.

Bill Brewer – asked if clubs can run GRF games every quarter.

Steve Moese mentioned that May is GRF month where clubs can run as many GRF games as they want. Also, every Sectional and Regional tournament can run up to two GRF events. If run at a sectional, the GRF event pays regional rated sliver points. Consult ACBL for extra table fees required. See [ACBL 2026 Special Event Schedule](#) See also [Special Games for Club Managers](#) – there is a GNT promotional game allowed for raising funds. Clubs cannot hold GRF games in January, February, April, or September.

LOOKING FORWARD

Steve mentioned Ryan’s projection that we can expect \$1000 per year income from the D11 Finals and \$3000 from the ACBL GRF rebates totaling about \$4000.

What we are committed to:

NAP – the ACBL pays \$700 and \$300 per person to the first and 2nd place qualifiers when they play. D11 pays nothing. D11 pays \$200 to the 3rd place qualifiers per person for all flights and \$150 to the 4th place qualifiers per person, if any, for flights B&C. Our commitment is therefore \$2200 per year.

GNT – The ACBL pays only the entry fees for the first 2 days, but those are charged back to the Districts from their GRF disbursement. They pay no other stipend. D11 pays \$1000 per team (\$500 for second place teams if any from flights B&C) on proof of participation in the NABC. This part of the stipend amounts to \$4000-5000 per year for a total of \$6200-7200.

Entry Fees – D11 Also pays entry fees for Days 3-5 for participating teams. At \$45 per person that is \$180 per session. For 6 sessions across 3 days that’s \$1080 maximum per team. For 6 teams the maximum outlay possible is \$6480. We have never had 6 teams in the final day competition. No one has. Nevertheless, the commitment is large and carries some risk. The Board can always propose compensation for any team winning their GNT event were funds available. The maximum stipend commitment is in the neighborhood of \$12,580 to 13,580 per year. Our current payout is closer to \$6-7K.

The entry fee payment was first authorized in February 3, 2018 by the D11 Board. The Covid pandemic intervened so we have only 4 years making these payments.

Other Districts pay wildly varying stipends. D9 Florida with 19,000 members pays more than \$2K per team. We do not have data on exact reimbursements. 13 or 14 Districts run their own regionals and earn those profits directly. They can afford higher stipends.

While the disbursements make the awards seem disproportionately in favor of the GNT, from the player’s perspective, the opposite is true. NAPs are better funded than the GNTs. At the current D11 stipend, a GNT team gets \$250 per person assuming a 4-person team. That reduces in half for a 2nd place team. The ACBL pays NAP individual player \$700 each. Our stipend to the NAP go to the 3rd and 4th place players who get nothing from the ACBL. So, the GNT is currently less supported.

GRF Reimbursement from the ACBL - The ACBL takes all the GRF contributions (\$5.52 per club table and \$7 per regional table) and withholds 20%. They then calculate how to split that 20% across all Districts. There are two factors – District population (smaller Districts get larger awards) and District GRF Contributions (The Funds on a per capita basis are compared to the average for the year, and positive deviations from the mean get more money).

District 11 has suffered both from a great reduction in the number of GRF games, and from underperforming our GRF \$/member compared to other Districts. Our size rank gives us a “1” factor of a possible 0, 1, 2. In the past we received 30% more than what we contributed. Now we get under 100%.

If everyone does GRF events we can get back close to our historical funding level.

Bill Brewer and Ryan Schultz along with the entire Board of Directors should aggressively promote GRF games in all D11 clubs this coming May.

Options to Fund GRF subsidies

- 1) Reduce or eliminate subsidies all or in part
- 2) Encourage clubs to run as many GRF games as possible in May and any other month allowed by the ACBL.
- 3) Run two GRF events at all our sectionals and regionals.
- 4) Change the fee structure paid to the District for Sectional and Regional Tournaments.

Eliminating subsidies for 3rd and 4th place for NAPs flights B&C seems out of place. The purpose of the GRF National Event is to introduce upcoming players to NABCs. Reducing their stipends is counter the objective.

Steve reviewed the number of Sectional and Regional tables in 2025 - about 2K tables each. If we charged sectionals \$1 per table and Regionals \$2 per table, D11 would recoup \$6000. Steve reviewed the impact to each Unit. District fees to tournaments could be relaxed were the club GRF income to rise.

Marsha Callahan suggested we cut the reimbursement for entry fees.

Tom Bishell Unit 122 suggested we could raise the entry fee for the D11 Finals to \$18. Potter Orr suggested that the table counts at District finals are small so we shouldn't expect great income.

Potter reviewed the current fee District 11 charges our regionals - \$250 each plus \$0.40 per table. A split regional would also pay the same fee. Other Districts are all over the place. Districts who run their own regionals have no need for these fees. The current fee structure is decades old, dating back to when regional table fees were under \$9.

Steve Mentioned that the current rate takes in about \$1800. Changing the fee to \$250 plus \$1/table raises income to \$2800.

Bob Stitt Unit 136 asked how to convince players who are not interested in GRF tournaments to pay extra for GRF purposes. Dayton has had 8 players combined to play in the D11 finals. Dayton is ½ hour from the Cincinnati location and we cannot get members to travel there to play.

Bill Brewer – the Regionals support the Units to a great extent. Touching the Regional revenue is a difficult choice. The D11 GRF Finals are just for a few people. While we want more people participating, we also need to steward funds for the membership as a whole.

Steve Moese – the District can add a fee to every NAP Qualifier club game. We have over 1700 people qualifying for the NAP finals. Only a few percent play in the finals. The people playing in the NAP Finals are who benefit from the extra masterpoints. The ACBL surcharge for NAP Qualifier games goes to the stipends that they pay 1st and 2nd place qualifiers. We do not have the total District table count for NAP Qualifier club games in 2025.

Bob Stitt – Dayton covers all special game charges.

Bill Brewer – one large club in Cincinnati runs no special games at all.

Marsha Callahan – we need to do a lot more work to get our clubs playing more GRF games.

Bob Stitt – we can guarantee Dayton will contribute \$1000 to the GRF in May.

Steve Moese – mentioned the lack of interest by clubs to support Unit and District events as a barrier we have to overcome. Clubs must do more, and we have to commit to driving that.

Maribeth Ransel – How many Units supplement the stipends for the NAP and GNT (Dayton, Cincinnati Columbus, Indianapolis said yes).

Steve Moese – questioned why we have a fixed + variable formula instead of the fairer variable cost formula.

MOTION: Jim Barrett Unit 124 **SECOND:** Marsh Callahan Unit 130

Eliminate the reimbursement of GNT entry fees effective immediately. Passed with one dissent (Bishel)

MOTION: Tom Bishel Unit 122 **SECOND:** Jim Barrett Unit 124

Raise entry fee for the D11 NAP and D11 Finals to \$18 per person effective immediately. Passed with one dissent (Holroyd).

MOTION: Marsha Callahan Unit 130 **SECOND:** Bob Stitt Unit 136

D11 to assess regionals a tournament fee of \$1.50 per table effective immediately. Approved unanimously.

The District 11 charge \$1.50 per regional table effective immediately, replacing the long standing \$250 plus \$0.40 per table fee that goes back before entry fees were \$9 per person.

The Board agreed to consult with their club owners to assess the impact of a potential fee on NAP Qualifier games in June through August. We will reconsider this item in June 2026. We understand clubs have no incentive to agree. D11 does not have a GNT club level qualifiers eliminating that source of income from us. We get no monies from the NAP qualifiers – those fees go to the ACBL paid stipends. We get nothing now. A fee of \$1 per club table might raise about \$1400 from players benefiting from the extra masterpoints.

Bill Brewer – asked how the funds for the District fee would be handled.

Steve Moese - we have to consult the ACBL on whether they or the club manager would pay the District.

Raising the District Regional table fee to \$1.50 per table raises about \$3000, or an incremental \$1200. Dayton will pay about \$130 more.

Potter Orr, Treasurer – asked who gets the check from the Winter STaC from District 7. Indianapolis gets that refund.

Treasurer's Report

Potter reviewed the topline for calendar 2024 and 2025. Differences were due to regional fees due the District being paid. Steve Moese asked for year-end summaries for the website for 2023 – 2025. A simple version would be best. Potter will get us annual summaries.

D11 Tournament Poster – Potter Orr

The Board approved purchasing one poster and stand for each Unit for about \$80 each. Potter will add the NAP Finals and reduce to font size for the addresses. He will also add the D11 website URL. Potter will send us the pdf of the final poster so Units can print and distribute at clubs. The District will fund one poster per Unit. Updates will be done at the end of every year. Clubs and Units can order more posters and stands at their own expense.

SECRETARY REPORT/WEBSITE REPORT/ADVISORY COUNCIL REPORT - Steve Moese

The pianola usage since last meeting was shared. Potter will bill the Units accordingly. Unit 130 spent \$331.60 for the current regional. Potter will invoice the Unit. Steve Moese will purchase \$1000 more credits before the Cincinnati Regional.

Steve reported the D11 Board of Director's attendance. Dotty Losey has failed to attend 3 of 4 meetings in a year. The Board accepts her resignation. The Board concurred that the Secretary will send an email accepting her resignation from the Board of Directors.

Advisory Council Report

Open discussion continues on the format allowed for local sectionals. Local sectionals are run by specially trained local directors, are limited to 35 tables per session, and all events except Swiss Teams must be one-session events. Local sectionals also pay fewer masterpoints that are 80% silver and 20% black.

The ACBL proposes an increase in allowed tables to 50 per session, but a reduction of masterpoint awards to 50%. Games over 30 tables would require two (2) local directors. Also any sectional with 30 or more tables per section must use two (2) specially trained local directors.

The ACBL not only wants to protect opportunities for its TD employees to work, but the ACBL also makes income from what they charge tournaments for their employees. Local sectionals are increasing across the ACBL.

The ACBL is asking every District to run 2 grass roots fund games per tournament.

The ACBL will continue to allow online pair games at regionals on a case-by-case basis. The ACBL makes it clear that tournaments lose money on these events because the breakeven point is about 15 tables.

Non-members are not allowed to participate in sectional tournaments. Players must have an ACBL number assigned to play and lapsed members will be assessed an additional fee per session.

Larry Sealy' report is on the D11 Website. He confirms that the ACBL will test a new NABC format in the Fall and Spring, eliminating the Regional and I/N events entirely. All events will be NABC.NABC+, with two-Day events having a consolation finals format. All events will pay platinum points and titanium points (new). The change will happen in fall 2028. The ACBL expects to use much less space for this format opening up more affordable venues in the future.

TOURNAMENT COORDINATOR - Tom Bishel

Calendar is updated on the website – Royal STaC in March 2026. The ACBL sends an automated message to members.

Email announcement on google drive about nonmember eligibility for tournament play. The ACBL is enforcing current policy. People can join at the tournament.

Marsha Callahan introduced the proposal for Indianapolis to host a second I/N Regional tournament in the Spring (March or early May). The District has 5 I/N Regional sanctions to grant. No other Unit asked for an I/N tournament. Participation in the recent Indianapolis I/N tournament was above 120 table and much bigger than other I/N regionals in the area. Local players are enthusiastic. I/N Regionals can run simultaneously with NABC tournaments as long as they are outside a given radius. The board expressed a favorable reaction to the proposal and will vote on a motion in Cincinnati.

MOTION: Tom Bishel Unit 122 **SECOND:** Jim Barrett Unit 124

Modify our standing rules so that all Regionals are scheduled by October 1 for the following year.

Passed Unanimously.

Tom Bishel asked that people send him a note when they need his approval for a new tournament. The ACBL does not contact him.

Next Board Meeting is in Cincinnati on Thursday June 11, 2026 after the 2nd session.

There being no more business before the Board, on motion and second, Billie Brown adjourned the meeting at 12:30 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Steve Moese, Secretary

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