



Northwest Chess 4th Quarter 2018 Board Meeting Sunday, December 9, 2018 via Zoom (online meeting)

In attendance: Chouchanik Airapetian (WCF), Eric Holcomb (Business Manager), Alex Machin (director-at-large), Duane Polich (Publisher), Jeff Roland (ICA), Josh Sinanan (WCF) and David Yoshinaga (OCF). Absent: Brian Berger (OCF), Adam Porth (ICA). Time: The meeting was called to order at 7:07 p.m., and was adjourned at 8:46 p.m.

Minutes/Bylaws – The September and November meeting minutes were read and approved [Duane/Josh]. Per the November meeting, the new name of the corporation is Northwest Chess Foundation. Revised Bylaws have been posted online, however, we will delay using this name until the change is filed with the State of Washington. Duane (our registered agent with the state) was advised to obtain the necessary information and make this filing as soon as possible, rather than waiting until the annual report. The IRS nonprofit application is now expected to happen in January.

Budget – The NWC financial status is currently OK, with about \$5,000 available. Eric presented a budget spreadsheet for this year (2018); essentially complete except for December memberships. The data shows a small loss, which will likely turn into a small gain by the end of the year. Although dues rates increased this year, so did expenses (mostly compensation). It was noted that this is not sustainable. There were suggestions to increase revenue in a variety of ways, for example by obtaining more ads, more scholastic members, more donations, etc. Discussion: Is this realistic, or “pie-in-the-sky?” NWC would already be out of funds without the donation by WCF of its membership share. The 501c3 status may help; but cannot by itself be expected to bring in generous donations. Chess tournaments are still a limited market; for example, only 13 people are currently registered for NWC Open fundraiser next weekend, and there is competition from the new Pacific NW Chess Center, which itself is currently running a deficit, according to Josh. This is an ongoing discussion; and will be revisited in 2019.

Magazine, etc. – One of the suggestions for obtaining more revenue is to require state memberships for certain premier scholastic events. To make the magazine more desirable to scholastic chess players, it was suggested that there should be four pages of scholastic chess coverage in most monthly issues. This could require a scholastic editor or editors. Duane and Jeff will work on trying to implement this increased scholastic coverage in the magazine, and David will consult with the Oregon scholastic director. Duane also mentioned the topic of “building our brand,” and asked how we should do this, including other activities besides the magazine. This is also an ongoing discussion; which will be revisited in 2019.

Ad Rates – There was discussion once again about a possible increase in NWC magazine advertising rates. Eric will come up with a specific proposal for our next regular meeting, or for a special meeting. Josh is in favor of gradual rate increases over time for membership and ad rates. The WCF already uses this approach for tournament entry fees.

Other Topics and Action Items – We need to finish our State of Washington filing (name change) and nonprofit application. Duane and Eric will work on these. Duane would also like to see more detailed purpose and mission statements than what appear in the Bylaws. Duane also requested monthly financial reports. Eric currently uses various spreadsheets to track finances; and will post those in the Dropbox more frequently. Eric also mentioned that the online registration system software needs to be upgraded to make membership updates more automatic. He will resend a document prepared last year on the topic of recommended upgrades to the system.

Calendar – There was a discussion about implementing a Google-based calendar of events on our website, in place of, or in addition to, the old-fashioned list-style calendar. There are several advantages of Google calendars, including the ability to download events into your personal calendar on a variety of devices, however Eric expressed concern about the readability of events in calendar boxes versus full-line listings. We may have an overlap period with both systems. For now, Eric will review the Google-based calendar used on the website chessreg.com, which includes some WCF events along with numerous scholastic events.

Next quarterly board meeting – Scheduled for Sunday, March 3, at 7 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:46 p.m. [motion by Jeff, seconded by Duane, agreed by all].
Recorded and transcribed by Eric Holcomb.

Following adjournment, there was a brief informal discussion about including games and copy editor Ralph Dubisch in at least some of our board meetings. Ralph is very knowledgeable; and has been very helpful to Jeff in editing the magazine.