



Northwest Chess Special Board Meeting

Sunday, April 7, 2019 via Zoom (online meeting)

In attendance: Chouchanik Airapetian (WCF), Brian Berger (OCF), Eric Holcomb (Business Manager), Alex Machin (director-at-large), Duane Polich (Publisher), Jeff Roland (ICA), Josh Sinanan (WCF) and Murlin Varner (NW Grand Prix administrator). Absent: Adam Porth (ICA), David Yoshinaga (OCF). Time: The meeting was called to order at about 7:00

p.m.; and was adjourned at 10:23 p.m. Duane reported that he had met with Adam Porth recently in Spokane. Eric will send ICA a copy of the invoice for amounts currently owed for ads and GP for 2018.

Minutes – The March meeting minutes were read in summary and approved [Duane/Josh].

Resignation of OCF board reps – David Yoshinaga, representing the OCF, previously (on April 1) announced his resignation and that of Brian Berger as official OCF board reps (on the NWC board), since OCF decided to leave NWC effective April 1. Brian reported that he is disappointed, and he is no longer involved in OCF meetings. After significant discussion, there was a motion [Duane/Jeff] to accept the resignations “under protest,” since NWC feels that OCF’s withdraw should not be official until members vote at the annual meeting at the Oregon Open. The motion passed 6-0. Although Brian is no longer on the NWC board, he continues as an advisor at board meetings due to his favorable position regarding the value of *Northwest Chess* magazine.

News Coverage – As a result of OCF’s withdraw from NWC, there was a discussion of Oregon news coverage in the magazine. Should there be more limited Oregon news coverage, or none at all? What about other Oregon events not affiliated with OCF or the Portland Chess Club? The PCC has already indicated that they don’t intend to advertise with NWC after the ads already scheduled for May. For now, Oregon news coverage will be at the discretion of the Editor and Publisher. An article about the Oregon state championship is still scheduled to appear in the May magazine.

Bylaws – Due to the change in status of OCF and ICA, NWC Bylaws changes are needed. Eric suggested that ICA have one seat on the NWC board; Duane was “gun shy” about that idea. Eric, Duane and possibly Murlin will serve on a committee to study board and bylaws changes, with the intention that it be done before the end of the second quarter. One good suggestion is that the NWC (to be NWCF) board should be more independent, with directors at large who support the magazine.

Grand Prix – The NW Grand Prix rules will need to be updated now that OCF has left NWC; and intends to administer its own GP this year. Murlin will work on the changes. There was a request that Washington players could still earn GP points by playing in Portland, however, there was no support or motion made to do this. Murlin said that he has already removed the PCC January events from this year’s GP (and the GP fees paid to NWC were refunded). After this discussion, Murlin needed to leave the meeting early at 8:07 p.m.

Budget/Finances – Eric presented a summary showing the current NWC available balance as \$7,160.31. The Portland CC ad balance (for 2019) of \$260 was applied to OCF membership shares for the first quarter (prior to the OCF withdraw), and GP fee refund, with a difference of only \$11.32 excess above the \$260 applied.

Memberships/Subscriptions – There was motion [Eric/Jeff] to offer a non-member subscription rate of \$25 for one year, which is consistent with ICA’s premium rate of \$35 (with \$10 to ICA). Duane offered an amendment, which was accepted, to make this rate “promotional” until June 30, after which the NWC board can decide to continue or modify the offered rate. The motion passed unanimously.

Advertising – There was a motion [Jeff/Chouchan; suggested by Eric] that NWC website event ads (for events not advertised in the magazine) will cost \$10 for a simple event listing on the calendar page, and \$15 for both the calendar and TA pages. Scholastic events on the calendar page are exempt, and the BM will have the discretion to grant one-time exemptions for small clubs, new events, events of a primarily educational nature, etc. The motion passed with 5 “yes” votes and one abstention.

Magazine Committee – The committee to study online magazine publication options consists of Duane (Publisher), Jeff (Editor) and Chouchan. Eric (Business Manager) will serve as a technical consultant if needed, along with Jacob, a member of the WCF board. The committee promises to have a meeting in the Seattle area over pizza, but this has not happened yet. Previously it was reported that we would inquire about a special print deal which US Chess may have for *Chess Life* magazine. The inquiry was made, but we learned that the printer has a minimum print run of 5,000 copies, versus only 1,000 for Sound Publishing in Everett, which currently prints and mails NWC.

Additional Discussion/Going Forward – There was significant additional discussion of the issues relating to the departure of OCF from NWC. The legality of the OCF vote was questioned because of an issue relating to a board member, and it was asked if the OCF acted in the “best interest” of its members. According to Brian, there were only nine responses to an email OCF sent to its members requesting feedback on leaving NWC and no longer requiring a magazine subscription. In Brian’s opinion, this doesn’t represent “the will of the majority.” It was also asked if this matter should be brought to the attention of US Chess. Murlin, who has long experience as a US Chess delegate, suggested that US Chess might have some concern about issues relating to the bylaws of official state affiliates, and suggested that any complaint should be filed by an Oregon resident.

No motions were made; however, it is expected that there will be editorials in the May and June magazines, and possibly subsequent editions as well, up to the time of the OCF annual membership meeting at the Oregon Open in September. According to the OCF Bylaws, the membership is supposed to ratify any Bylaws changes (such as no longer being associated with Northwest Chess) approved by the OCF board.

Other New Business – Duane strongly suggested that Oregon subscribers to *Northwest Chess* should be required to “opt in” if they want to continue receiving a print edition of the magazine (otherwise they could be provided with a PDF). A vigorous discussion ensued, mostly between Duane and Jeff, even though there was no second to the motion. Jeff and Eric stated that NWC is obligated to honor all existing print subscriptions, unless someone “opts out.” The meeting temporarily broke down at about 9:24 p.m. Eventually order was restored, and the board agreed on the “opt out” approach, which will be included in Eric’s Business Manager message for May. Eric also offered to research postal regulations regarding print vs. online magazine distribution.

Potential new board member – A potential new board member (as a new NWC member at large) joined the discussion at about 10:05 p.m. He reported that in 2017, most Portland CC members supported the magazine, but in 2018 support began to erode due to the cost issue (dues increase). He still likes being part of organized chess in the Northwest (including NWC) and may be invited to take part in further discussion.

Next board meeting – The 2nd Quarter NWC board meeting will be scheduled for a Sunday evening in June (to be decided). Hopefully this meeting will include any proposed Bylaws amendments.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:23 p.m. [agreed by all], with limited extra unofficial discussion after adjournment.

Recorded and transcribed by Eric Holcomb.