



Regional Committee

## Regional Conference 2017 Minutes

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Regional Conference held on: **Sunday 24 September 2017** - 10:00 at the Matamata Bridge Club.

### **Present:**

Rona Driscoll (Chairperson), Michael Neels, Anna Kalma, Ian Moore & Jan Spaans (Secretary/Treasurer) of the Regional Committee.

Karen Martelletti, Alan Turner, Clare Coles & Jane Stearns of the NZ Bridge Board

13 of the 22 clubs were represented by:

Carol Crowfoot, Jena Robinson & Greg Davenport (Thames), Nigel Gresson & Ella Gray (Hamilton), Bren Birss & Carol Cullen (Mount Maunganui), Stuart McKinlay (Taupo), Alan Dick & Heini Lux (Rotorua), Jan Wills & Beth Vosper (Matamata), Peter Daffurn (Te Aroha), David Munro & Joss Davis (Te Puke), Peter Hobman (Cambridge), David Luxton (Omokoroa), Pat Ware & Kate Terry (Tauranga), Eileen Barker & Ngaire Wallace (Putaruru), Lynda Osborne & Bronwyn Kamphorst (Whakatane)

**Apologies received:** Brian Gallaher (Waikato) & Nick Cantlon (Te Awamutu).

**Nothing heard from:** Taumarunui, Tokoroa, Huntly, Waihi, Katikati, Kawerau, Morrinsville (RSVP received but representative didn't show).

### **Welcome**

Rona welcomed all to the meeting and acknowledged the presence of Alan Turner and Karen Martelletti, Clare Coles and Jane Stearns of the NZ Bridge Board.

### **Presentations**

**Anna Kalma** had been number crunching and compared our region to the wider NZ Bridge population. In summary:

- Our region had grown by 4% since 2013 until last year. We grew 0.5% since the last Regional Conference. We remain the second largest region by club member population.
- Solely based on home club members, 50% of our bridge members are located in 5 clubs, Tauranga, Hamilton, Mt Maunganui, Taupo and Cambridge.

- Membership growth was seen at Cambridge (32), Whakatane (27), Taupo (23), Te Aroha (18), Mt Maunganui (14), Katikati (13) and Waihi (12).
- Negative membership trend was seen at some smaller clubs but at the large clubs also.

**Will Fulton** of the Franklin Bridge Club recounted his experience as a new player, from his motivation to tag along to the lessons, completing the lessons to starting play and to coming across the local battle axe trout which just about put him off playing ever again.

He recalled an excellent experience from attending a session of club play at Paul Marston's Bridge Club.

He referred to a cheat sheet which he felt was too complicated and therefore created his own.

He certainly gave us food for thought in regards to how to welcome and nurture the new players rather than throwing them in the deep end.

**Alan Turner** gave us a brief history of how the series of 10 bridge lessons for each of beginners and improvers came into existence and that the Teachers Committee is currently developing lessons for intermediates. Alan asked feedback as to which subjects the committee should cover in these intermediate lessons.

**Jane Stearns** gave us a passionate speech about how to enhance the experience for new members, how to welcome them and nurture them with a buddy.

She also pointed out that the playing environment is the first thing new players get to see and may be putting them off from coming back. Her power point presentation can be found on the NZ Bridge and WB web sites under resources. This is all strategy in order to keep them playing.

Plenty of networking was done during an excellent lunch organized by the Matamata Bridge Club.

After lunch we saw presentations from:

**Michael Spring**, Immediate Past President of Bowls New Zealand, who showed us how Bowls NZ had tackled the challenge of falling membership by changing what they have to offer.

Amongst other things, they now try to cater for the baby boomers, generation X and Y and are now looking at the Millennials by offering punters (so not needed to become a member of a bowling club) to have one-off games where they can hire bowling gear, be shown quickly how to bowl and have a game called "Jack Attack", usually followed by a trip to the bar. It had increased the revenue of the clubs considerably as they were attractive to work functions, team building exercises etc.

He pointed out that Bowls NZ had gone into partnership with "Strong and Sustainable Clubs" which were resourced to host these kind of activities and these clubs were checked with a kind of WOF.

Bowls NZ have set up Community Development Officers in order to support the bowling clubs.

Michael also pointed out the **seven drivers to club satisfaction**

- Decent Facilities
- Great Coaches
- Good Communications
- Good Social Environment
- Professionalism and Expertise
- Friendly and Welcoming
- Fulfilling Potential

Bowls is trying very hard to shake the "old people's game" image.

**Clare Coles** told us that the current Board is a happy one and that the communications between Board and clubs/players was regular. There is no secrecy in the Board and there had not been “in committee” meetings.

Clare also pointed out the main points of a three year Strategic Plan. The strategic plan was not started with a blank piece of paper, as in recent years some work was done and published in the Arrowside report, the consultancy report from Allan Morris and Stephen Henry and the previous plan developed by the Board.

Amongst some questions from the floor was the radio advertising campaign. This was received with mixed enthusiasm. Some clubs would do it again, perhaps at a different radio station and one club was dead against it.

Rona pointed out that next week is another important meeting, namely the NZB Bridge AGM at 9:00am on Saturday at the start of Congress. She urged the clubs to send representatives.

Meeting closed at 14:30.

Jan Spaans  
Waikato Bays Regional Secretary / Treasurer.

Minutes confirmed by



Name (*printed*): Rona Driscoll..... Role: Chair Person.....