

## **RBA POLICIES, PROCEDURES, AND GUIDELINES**

**The attached document has not been revised for awhile, so there are some changes that need to be made. A committee has been formed for the purpose of revising these policies, procedures and guidelines. If you would like to make suggestions for changes, please contact one of the committee members: [Paul Anderson](#), [Steve Chaplin](#), [Ed Kinlaw](#), [George Lewis](#), or [Linda MacCleave](#).**

# **RBA POLICIES, PROCEDURES, AND GUIDELINES**

## **STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

The Richmond Bridge Association (RBA) is organized to preserve, promote and stimulate interest in duplicate bridge. It has been chartered by and functions within the bylaws, regulations, and policies established by the American Contract Bridge League (ACBL). In addition, it operates within the Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws that have been enacted by the membership of the organization.

From time to time, the Board of Directors has established various policies, procedures, and guidelines (PPG) to provide operational guidance in the day to day management of the organization.

It is the purpose of this manual to set forth, in a centralized source, those PPGs. Therefore, all PPGs will be applied in a consistent and fair manner. Any member of the RBA shall have access to this manual. Copies of the Bylaws and Articles of Incorporation will be included for reference.

These PPGs are subordinate to the Bylaws, Articles of Incorporation, the laws of Virginia, and the policies and regulations of the American Contract Bridge Association. They are meant to clarify and expand upon the responsibilities and duties of the various officers, board members, committees, etc., not limit their normal activities.

This is meant to be a living document, providing up-to-date guidance to the RBA.

## **AUTHORIZATION OF MONETARY OBLIGATIONS**

The Officers and Directors of the Richmond Bridge Association are hereby authorized to incur monetary obligations on behalf of the Richmond Bridge Association contingent to the following terms and conditions:

1. The monetary obligation incurred is in furtherance of a clear objective of the Richmond Bridge Association.
2. The officer or director is acting within the clear scope of his/her authority.
3. The monthly amount of the monetary obligation shall not exceed the sum of one hundred dollars (\$100.00) in the aggregate.
4. All monthly obligations incurred shall be reimbursed in full before additional monetary obligations are incurred.
5. Valid receipts shall be presented to the Treasurer for reimbursement. (Note: See section on Finance.)
6. Should the Treasurer or any member of the Board of Directors question the propriety of any monetary obligation incurred, such obligation shall be presented to the Board for consideration, which will result in allowance or disallowance thereof.

7. Anything to the contrary notwithstanding concerning the dollar limitations herein stated, certain events may require prepayment, such as Sectional tournaments and other special events. Such larger amounts pre-approved by the Board are hereby authorized.

This section is meant to be read along with the section titled *Finances*.

### **CHEER AND SYMPATHY**

The Secretary will send a card to all seriously ill members. Additionally, a condolence card sent to the family of the deceased will remember all deaths.

### **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

Whenever possible, Officers, Directors, or committee members shall not be placed in a position which would affect them, their spouses, significant others, other family members, or business associates or would pose a conflict of interest.

### **CONTRACTING AUTHORITY**

The RBA may enter into contracts, as it deems appropriate, to advance the objectives and principles of the organization. However, such contracts may only be entered into with the approval of the Board.

The President of the organization, acting with the approval of the Board, may only sign such contracts on behalf of the RBA.

Nothing in this policy prohibits any Officer, member of the Board, or committee chairman from negotiating (but not entering into) a contract, provided that the subject being negotiated is within the scope of his/her authority.

### **DISCIPLINARY ACTIVITIES**

The Richmond Bridge Association is a strong supporter of appropriate behavior at all times by members and non-members at RBA events. Activities such as the following have no place at RBA events:

- Abusive language
- Abusive behavior to partner, opponents, caddies, directors, or anyone else
- Anti-social behavior
- Cheating
- Disruption of event

- Drunken behavior
- Illegal drug use
- Intimidation and bullying
- Loud outbursts
- Physical violence
- Other such activities

The RBA supports the zero tolerance guidelines of the ACBL, active ethics, and other such activities.

There shall be a Conduct and Ethics Committee (C & E). The President shall appoint a chairman of the committee, who shall submit the proposed committee membership to the Board for approval. Neither the chairman nor the committee members shall be members of the Board. The C & E Committee shall report to the Board either on their own volition or at the Board's request, as appropriate.

Policies, Procedures, and Guidelines for the C & E have been established by the ACBL and will not be detailed herein.

## **ELECTIONS**

The Rules of Election are presented in the Bylaws, Article VIII. On April 11, 1993, the Board approved a policy detailing the Requirements for Voting by Absentee Ballot. This policy is hereby attached to and made part of this section of the Policy and Procedures Manual

As detailed in the Bylaws, the election will be held at the Annual Meeting. The President will appoint people to distribute, collect, and count ballots. At least three (3) ballot counters are required. If there are a large number of ballots, the ballots can be split into separate groups for the purposes of speed and efficiency. If this occurs, at least three (3) counters will count each group. Any candidate may have an observer at the counting. Ballots will be saved for a period of thirty (30) days to allow for any challenges to the election.

Any disputes to the election will be resolved by reference, in order, to the Bylaws, Roberts Rules of Order, and the Laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

### **Requirements for Voting by Absentee Ballot**

1. The ballot provided by the Secretary of the RBA shall be the official ballot.
2. The ballot will provide a place for signature by the voting member that is separate and removable from the member's vote, so that the act of voting by the member can be recorded while maintaining the privacy of the member's vote.
3. The member shall sign the ballot in the place designated.

4. The member should deliver the ballot to the secretary at least two (2) days prior to the annual membership meeting.
5. The Secretary shall remove the signature from each absentee ballot and retain in a record of the members voting by absentee ballot during each election.
6. The Secretary shall deliver the record of members voting by absentee ballot to the chairperson of the tellers' committee at the beginning of the annual RBA membership meeting.
7. The chairperson of the tellers' committee shall ensure that any member who voted by absentee ballot does not cast a vote by another ballot at the membership meeting.
8. The Secretary shall deliver the absentee ballots to the chairperson of the tellers' committee at the time that election votes are to be counted.
9. The tellers' committee shall open the absentee ballots and include the absentee ballot votes in the count of all votes when determining the outcome of the election.
10. The absentee ballot applies to the first count only.

## **FINANCES**

Day to day financial operation of the RBA will be the responsibility of the Treasurer. Detailed financial reports shall be presented to the Board at the monthly meeting and shall be posted on the RBA bulletin board at the Bridge Center. Copies of such reports shall be made available to any member requesting them.

Additionally, at the beginning of the fiscal year the Treasurer will submit an annual projection of income and expenses for the year. Quarterly status reports will be made and the annual projection adjusted as necessary.

Reimbursement of all expenditures will be made only upon the submission of a paid receipt or other evidence of payment. No requests for reimbursement shall be made after 60 days from the date of expenditure or the conclusion of the event, whatever occurs later, unless prior approval has been obtained from the Treasurer.

The President or Treasurer shall have the authority to sign checks drawn against the financial accounts of the RBA.

Our annual audit of the financial records of the RBA will be conducted as soon after the end of the fiscal year as possible. Such report will be made part of the permanent records of the RBA. If the person(s) conducting the audit are members of the RBA, they may not be members of the Board or any financially related committee of the RBA.

See section entitled "Authorization of Monetary Obligations" for further policies on expenditures.

## **HALL OF FAME**

In November 1993, the Board approved the establishment of the RBA Hall of Fame. Its purpose is to honor those members who have made significant, long-term contributions to the advancement of bridge in the Richmond area.

The Board approved a mission statement, committee membership, and procedures to be followed in selecting and recognizing these achievements. These are attached to this section and are made part of the PPM.

## **INSTITUTING POLICY CHANGES**

The Board of Directors establishes policies, procedures, and guidelines as a normal course of doing business. No special rules for submission or voting are required. The Board may, at its discretion, determine that a specific PPG is of sufficient impact that it ought to be considered by the membership at the Annual Meeting, by mail ballot, or other means.

Any member may petition the Board to institute or modify a specific PPG. The member has the right to appear at the Board meeting and present any comments that he/she deems appropriate. (As discussed in the section on Meetings, adequate notice is required.) Additional PPGs may be introduced by any member and considered at the Annual Meeting with adequate notice.

## **INSURANCE COVERAGE**

The Board of Directors shall maintain insurance coverage as it deems appropriate to insure the fiscal responsibility of the RBA.

## **MEETINGS**

### **BOARD MEETINGS**

The RBA Board usually meets once a month, as determined by the Board.

Meetings shall be conducted using the procedures outlined in *Roberts Rules of Order*. A meeting announcement and agenda shall be prepared and, if possible, distributed prior to the meeting. Any Board member who cannot attend the meeting shall notify the President or Secretary prior to the meeting. Minutes shall be taken. An approved set of minutes and financial report shall be posted on the RBA bulletin board at the Bridge Center. Copies of minutes, financial reports, etc. shall be made available to any member upon request.

Meetings of the Board shall be open to any member, who also has the right to speak on any matter. However, since meetings are generally held in homes, and space or time may

be a problem, advance notice of such attendance shall be given to the President or Secretary. If there are extremely sensitive matters to be discussed before the Board (e.g., personnel issues, disciplinary matters), the Board may, if it deems appropriate, go into closed executive session. It is anticipated that this will be an extremely rare occurrence.

### **ANNUAL MEETING**

As detailed in the Bylaws, there shall be an open membership meeting held in May of each year. The agenda shall consist of the biannual elections of officers and board, as appropriate, presentation of Unit and National awards, report of the Treasurer on the financial status of the Unit, and President's report on the "State of the Unit." Additional items may be on the agenda. Procedures for notifications, elections, and other activities are discussed in the Bylaws.

### **OTHER MEETINGS**

Special meetings of the Board, membership, or committees may be held as appropriate and necessary.

## **NOVICE PROGRAM**

The RBA actively supports development of new players through a formalized "Novice Program." This is one of the main vehicles by which participation in this sport will grow. All Clubs within the RBA area are encouraged to support these activities.

Among the activities designed especially for novices are:

1. Special games at Regionals and Sectionals
2. A special game at RBA monthly games
3. Novice parties, "Ask the Expert" panels, lectures, etc.
4. Reduced entry fees at RBA sponsored events
5. Special prizes and awards for winning Novice events
6. "Pro-Am" games

A novice committee and a novice call committee shall be established to help promote this program.

## **PLAYING REGULATIONS**

The Board has established the following regulations regarding the play of the game and other RBA activities. These shall apply to all RBA activities. Clubs, however, are encouraged to follow these policies.

### **1. ACBL SUPREMACY**

The RBA is a subsidiary unit of the ACBL. Therefore, all sanctioned events, including monthly games and other special games, shall follow the rules of the

ACBL, as outlined by ACBL policies, the Laws, Condition of Contest, etc. This policy is meant to include such matters as the method of conducting the game, acceptability of conventions and treatments, scoring, awards, etc. (See the Statement of Purpose of this Policies and Procedures Manual for further comments on this subject.)

2. **SMOKING**

All events sponsored by the RBA shall be non-smoking events. Appropriate “hospitality” breaks will be established. All playing and ancillary areas will be non-smoking before, during, and between sessions. If feasible, special smoking areas will be created for that purpose.

3. **BULLETIN BOARD**

The bulletin board, currently located at the Bridge Center, is only for the use of the RBA. No other notices may be placed on it unless approved by the President or chair responsible for the maintenance of the bulletin board.

4. **SLOW PLAY**

The RBA and Director have an obligation to the players to keep the game on schedule. Continued slow play makes the game unpleasant for all players. Therefore, the Director shall enforce the ACBL regulations and penalties regarding slow play. See “Responsibilities” for further explanation.

## **PUBLICATIONS**

### **MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY**

Generally the RBA shall publish a membership directory every two years. The Board may, at its discretion, publish such a directory more frequently if it determines that this would be desirable.

In addition to the list of members, the Directory should contain a list of RBA sponsored events, clubs and their games, and other information that might be useful to the membership.

Advertising will be solicited to help defray the cost of publication. Current pricing for advertising is:

Inside front cover	\$75.00
Back cover (inside/outside)	\$75.00
Full page	\$60.00
Half page	\$35.00
Quarter page	\$20.00

The Directory Chairperson and/or the Board shall have the right to reject any advertising that is not appropriate for the RBA.

Each member of the RBA is entitled to receive one copy of the Directory. Additional copies will be available at a cost of \$1.00.

### **WHAT'S TRUMPS**

The RBA shall purchase a full page in the Bridge Center newsletter *What's Trumps*. Current cost is \$300 per year.

### **OTHER**

The RBA will publish a separate newsletter prior to the Christmas Mother game and Annual Membership meeting. Additional publications may be issued if appropriate.

### **RELATIONS WITH DISTRICT 6, MABC, AND ACBL**

The President or his/her designated representative will represent the interests of the RBA on issues considered by District 6, MABC, or the ACBL.

### **UNIT GAMES**

Currently the RBA conducts monthly games on the second Wednesday of each month. Starting time is 7:15 p.m. Currently the site for the games is the Bridge Center. Usually refreshments are served.

There are two types of events held at the monthly games, a regular game and a novice game, as follows:

January	Flighted Teams and Novice Pairs
February	Flighted Teams and Novice Pairs
March	Pro-Am Pairs
April	Flighted Teams and Novice Pairs
May	Stratified Pairs
June	Flighted Teams and Novice Pairs
July	Flighted Teams and Novice Pairs
August	Flighted Teams and Novice Pairs
September	Flighted Teams and Novice Pairs
October	Flighted Teams and Novice Pairs
November	Flighted Teams and Novice Pairs
December	Stratified Pairs

From time to time, the type of event may change to allow special games, such as the North American Pair qualifications, National Team qualifications, or other special games.

The strata are as follows:

- Strata A: Unlimited
- Strata B: 0-750 points
- Strata C: 0-200 points

If necessary, the Director may adjust the strata to balance the field. Further, the Director may conduct the Team game as a stratified event if, in his/her judgment, there is not adequate representation in each flight. Novice games may be included in the open games if an insufficient number of pairs register.

The Director's compensation is \$50.00 per session.

Prizes will be awarded for tops, as appropriate. Currently the prizes are a free entry and trophy recognition.

The December game is a charity game with the upcharge on the entry fee plus all additional monies raised being donated to one of the local Christmas Mother charity drives.

See section "Responsibilities for the RBA and Director of RBA Games" for further information.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DIRECTOR AND RBA AT RBA SPONSORED GAMES**

### **1. Setting up the game site**

The RBA Monthly Game Chairperson and the director should arrive at the game early (6:45) in order to set up the facility. The game and refreshments, etc., should be set up prior to the selling of entries to reduce confusion.

### **2. Assigning entries**

The Director must have the right to seed the field and assign players for all games. Other people may help to sell entries under the guidance of the director.

### **3. Assistance at the game**

A non-playing member of the RBA should be available to assist the Director at all games, if needed, as determined by the Chairperson and the Director.

### **4. Supplies**

The monthly game Chairperson will be responsible for keeping available a box of supplies at the game location. The Director will inform the Chairperson when supplies are low or certain supplies are needed.

### **5. Tardy players**

Players must be informed of a cut-off time for the purchase of entries, which shall be the starting time of the game. At least one member of the team or pair must be available prior to the cut-off time, or the player should call to let the Director know that he/she is coming, so that proper provisions can be made. The RBA must educate players as to the importance of arriving early. The Director has the authority to refuse entries to players who arrive late.

### **6. Slow players**

The Director should be provided with a timer. The Director should have the authority to take away any boards not played during the allowable time in a team game and assess a penalty of ¼ board in a pair game. One warning will be issued.

THE RBA MUST BACK UP THE DIRECTOR. This is consistent with ACBL policy.

7. **Posting results**

Posting results will be the responsibility of the Director. All results must be posted within 24 hours of the end of the game.

8. **Balancing all monies**

The Director is responsible for balancing all monies and reporting the amounts to the appropriate person. The Director will be responsible for making up any shortages.

9. **Communication**

The monthly game chairperson is responsible for informing the Director of any changes in the monthly game, such as type, stratification, cost, change in Director's fees, etc. This information should be given to the Director prior to the game night. The RBA should contact the Director prior to any changes for his input. Communication is essential.

10. **Responsibilities at the Bridge Center**

The key holder is responsible for turning out the lights, heat, air-conditioning, coffee pot, and locking all doors before leaving. The RBA is responsible for taking out the trash, putting away all supplies, leaving a check for the cleaning person, and assisting in closing up the Bridge Center. A checklist will be posted in the kitchen area of the Bridge Center.