

Rotorua Bridge Club  
9 November 2016

The Chairman  
NZ Bridge

Dear Arie,

The Rotorua Club Committee views with concern the current moves by NZ Bridge to apparently reorganise the structure and purpose of the Board of NZ Bridge and the consequent actions of a Board Member (Alan Turner) penning an open letter to clubs.

It is stating the obvious that there is friction and dissent, as was also expressed at the AGM from the floor. Such a change as seems to be being proposed is, we as a Committee believe, will require considerable thought and discussion amongst the members of NZ Bridge as it is we, via our members, who will ultimately deal with the outcome and have to foot the bill. We strongly believe that NZ Bridge must fully converse with its membership and apply the outcome of that discussion for best advantage – with appropriate reviews to ensure that the required outcomes are being achieved or modifying processes and procedures as time goes on so that they are achievable.

We recognise that the Board of NZ Bridge do a lot of work, are committed to the improvement and wellbeing of our game and do not lightly consider radical action or administrative change. We also understand that there is an increasing amount of work to be done – counter to the intuitive thought that with a total affiliated club roll of approximately 2/3 of our peak membership and a static or at best slowly improving membership cohort, which implies a lessening of workload, not an increase. Basically we understand that we are being asked to provide improved playing experiences with computerised scoring and the like and the ability to score and provide analyses across the bridge playing population, improved quality of Directing and Administration etc. That said it is our considered opinion that we need to rethink and rejig how we provide these services.

For example, there is an increasing number of retired knowledgeable people that could be drafted in to provide support and comment for NZ Bridge so that the workload can be spread, alternatives suggested and the Board can take a more Governance role, perhaps with re-tasking existing staff to perform the day to day work that is required.

Whatever is done, we need to ensure that the rank and file of our membership gets benefit. Anything less will generate charges that New Zealand Bridge is being managed for the elite, and clubs will question the benefit and cost – and some may withdraw from affiliation. We urge the NZ Bridge Board to take some time and involve clubs in the process of reorganisation that you, in your wisdom, are investigating and reviewing.

The current dissent is an opportunity to involve all stakeholders to arrive at a consensus and better administration of Bridge in New Zealand. There is good will available, we want a great outcome and we agree that the concerns expressed by Alan Turner are valid, as are the concerns of the Board in providing the administration and oversight that Bridge in New Zealand requires and deserves. We want to be involved in that process to ensure a good outcome. Haste is not required, but a good outcome is required. A process that involves the ultimate stakeholders for a majority agreed outcome will be beneficial to our game. We urge you and the Board to take the time and involve your stakeholders. Obtaining comment on the plan and the budget from clubs will assist the Board in obtaining this required outcome and ensure support for the changes in the future. Such a process

does not affect current staff or what they are tasked with – but the delivery of the resulting plan would do so and is properly then the domain of the Board as an employer.

Copies of this letter have been sent to Alan Turner and the Waikato Bays Regional Committee

Regards

Alan Dick

President, Rotorua Bridge Club