

Metropolitan Duplicate Bridge Unit Greater Houston Texas Area

Constitution

Article I Name

The name of this Houston-based organization shall be the Metropolitan Duplicate Bridge Unit (MDBU) of the Greater Houston Texas Area.

Article II Purpose

The purpose of the Metropolitan Duplicate Bridge Unit shall be to promote and develop duplicate bridge in the Greater Houston Area. It will sponsor Grade A Regional Week-End Tournaments; and it will sponsor the games for support of Sectional and National Tournaments. The Grade A Tournament and unit games shall always be conducted within the guidelines of the American Bridge Association (ABA).

Article III Membership

Membership in the Metropolitan Duplicate Bridge Unit shall consist of all ABA chartered clubs and their members located in the Metropolitan Houston Texas Area.

Article IV Officers-Election-Term-Installation

Section A - The number of officers of the Houston Metropolitan Duplicate Bridge Unit shall be six (6) elected officers and two (2) appointed officers, the Tournament Coordinator and the Parliamentarian. The elected officers shall be President, Vice-President, Corresponding and Recording Secretary, Financial Secretary, and Treasurer.

Section B - Election of Officers

Officers of the Metropolitan Duplicate Bridge Unit shall be elected by popular ballot of the general assembly of the financial members of the unit. The election of officers shall be held during the November meeting of the unit. The term of office shall begin January 1st of the coming year.

Section C - Term of Office

All officers shall be elected for a term of two (2) years. An unexpired term of office shall be filled by the unit's membership at the first regularly scheduled meeting of the unit. No officer may serve more than two (2) consecutive terms in the same position, except the treasurer whose term shall be without limit. The president, corresponding and recording secretary and the treasurer officers shall be elected in odd numbered years; and the vice-president, financial secretary shall be elected in even numbered years.

Section D - Installation of Officers

The installation shall be performed by the chairperson of the nominating committee or by a designated member in good standing. Installation of officers shall be at the last game of the year in which the officers are elected.

Article V Duties of Officers

Section A - President

The unit president shall preside at all meetings, shall exercise general supervision over the affairs and activities of the unit, and shall serve as ex-officio member on all standing committees. The president shall appoint the parliamentarian at the first unit regular meeting of the new year.

The unit president shall have the power to call a business meeting or an Executive Committee meeting whenever necessary and shall countersign all checks or orders drawn on the treasury. The unit president shall have the authority to appoint the point coordinator and the chairperson of each committee necessary to carry out unit business and shall have the authority to call for a complete audit of all financial records at any time.

Section B - Vice-President

The unit vice-president shall assist the unit president in all the executions of his/her duties and shall perform other duties as the unit president may direct. The unit vice-president shall preside in the absence of the unit's president.

Section C - Corresponding and Recording Secretary

The secretary shall keep the minutes of all regularly scheduled meetings and special meetings called by the president. The secretary shall be the custodian of all unit records and committee records, and shall be held accountable for these records. These data shall be available for an inspection committee at all times. The secretary must obtain all necessary information pertaining to sanctioned ABA sectional regional tournaments and submit this information to proper national representatives. The secretary shall be responsible for all official correspondence to the unit's membership.

In the absence of both the unit's president and the unit's vice-president, the secretary will preside over a regularly scheduled meeting of the unit. The secretary shall be prepared to present to the body all correspondence received.

Section D - Financial Secretary

The financial secretary shall collect all monies at unit-sanctioned games or any other MDBU function, and shall keep written records of all transactions. He/She shall turn over all collected monies to the treasurer, giving an accurate record to the treasurer and keeping a duplicate record. The treasurer shall sign the financial secretary's record to acknowledge receipt of such money. These records are to be kept by both officers for auditing purposes. The financial secretary shall be responsible for obtaining membership fees and ABA membership data from the secretary of each chartered club and for submitting necessary reports to the appropriate authorized national representative.

Section E - Treasurer

The treasurer shall be custodian of all finances and shall be held accountable for these finances. The treasurer shall co-sign checks with the president for payment of unit's debts. No payment(s) from funds entrusted to the treasurer shall be by cash or by any method other than by check.

The treasurer shall make a financial report to the unit at each regular meeting and shall keep full and accurate accounts of all the receipts and disbursements in books belonging to the unit.

The treasurer shall deposit all money in the name and to the credit of the unit in such a depository as is designated by the unit.

The treasurer shall file with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) the form(s) required for retention of the unit's non-profit status with the federal government.

Section F - Tournament Coordinator

The Tournament Coordinator is responsible for obtaining the supplies needed for tournament play. He/She will submit all bills (or receipts, if payment has already been made) to the financial secretary for payment by the treasurer. He/She shall keep an accurate and complete inventory of the materials owned by the unit. The Tournament Coordinator serves also as chairperson of the Tournament Committee.

Section G - Parliamentarian

The parliamentarian shall assist the officers in conducting meetings in a business like manner; interpret points, and advise the president on matter of parliamentarian procedure; and keep at hand a copy of the unit's section, and

national constitutions and bylaws and a standard publication on parliamentary procedures.

Article VI Point Coordinator

The point coordinator shall be appointed by the unit's president and shall be responsible for compiling city points and for submitting these city points to the national executive secretary's office.

The point coordinator shall receive members' points from the national office monthly and relay the point slips to club secretaries for distribution. He/She shall have responsibility for handling all point records and shall send the Point Edit Report to the unit's secretary to become a part of the unit's records.

Article VII - Standing Committees

Section A - Executive Committee

The executive committee shall consist of the elected officers of the unit, the president of each chartered club and two representatives. The two representatives shall be elected by popular ballot of the general assembly of the financial members of the unit.

Section B - Tournament Committee

The tournament committee shall consist of the unit's tournament coordinator and tournament coordinators from each chartered club. This committee shall formulate and complete the scheduling of all Grade B and Grade C club games.

The tournament committee shall also be responsible for presenting a proposed schedule and budget for the Grade A Weekend games for the unit's approval in advance of the meeting and for locating a hotel/motel as the site of the Grade A Weekend. The committee shall submit a complete report to the unit following each Grade A Tournament.

Section C - Audit Committee

It shall be the duty of the Audit Committee to review all records of the treasurer and make a report to the executive committee of its findings.

This report shall be made at the end of each year or any time requested by the executive committee.

Section D - Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee shall consist of one member from each chartered club. Its duty shall be to prepare a slate of officers and a ballot for the election of

the unit's officers. The nominee shall be made know prior to the election. The slate of officers shall consist of at least two names per vacancy to be filled at the November election.

The nominees shall be made known to the membership at least one month prior to the election. Any complaints about the election procedure must be called to the attention of the chairman of the committee immediately. If no satisfactory resolution is obtained, a written complaint must be made to the same committee no later than (1) day after the election. If a written response is not received within a three (3) day period, the complaint may then be forwarded up the line locally, sectionally, and nationally until resolved.

Section E - Appeals Committee (formerly called Card Committee)

The appeals committee (formerly called the Card Committee) shall consist of a chairperson and a minimum of one member, in good standing, from each chartered club. The committee shall function at all unit-sanctioned games. The committee may also serve in an advisory capacity at the request of any club within the unit. The Appeals Committee shall be charged with the responsibility of investigating and holding hearings on all matters pertaining to a player's written protest(s) of any ruling made at his/her table by the direction. Any written protest must be made within the unit's established time period of thirty (30) minutes after the game at which the protested decision was made. The findings and recommendations of the committee shall be reported to the director, unit president, and the player(s) to satisfy a quorum. The decisions of the committee will be determined by a majority vote and are considered final unless appealed to the sectional level, in writing, within thirty (30) days.

A minimum of four members, including the chairperson, shall constitute a quorum. In the event that a quorum is not present, the chairperson, unit's president or director-in-charge may designate a temporary member(s) to satisfy a quorum. The decisions of the committee will be determined by a majority vote and are considered final unless appealed to the sectional level, in writing, within thirty (30) days.

Section F - Ethics Committee

The purpose of the Ethics Committee is to identify actions in the bridge area that are unethical and to find the appropriate penalty to impose on the player(s) for the action. This committee shall be composed of one member from each chartered club, in good standing, and shall be charged with the duty and responsibility of investigating and holding hearings on all matters pertaining to conduct and ethics among unit members. Their findings and recommendations shall be reported to the unit.

General Categories of Ethical Infraction

1. Impatience – rudeness
2. Tardiness
3. Disrespect for decisions made by the director
4. Discussion of hands during (including before and after) play of hands or rounds
5. Special understandings between partners which convey information
6. Improper conduct of the director
7. Impoliteness/unpleasant attitude

Section G Recruitment and New Players Committee

The recruitment and New Players Committee shall consist of five (5) members in good standing, two (2) of which must be new players. The committee shall recruit and provide classes for new players and serve as new player advocates.

Article VIII Meetings

Section A - Scheduled Meetings

The minimum number of unit meetings shall be two (2) per year, and these meetings shall be held during the months of February and November.

Section B - Additional Meetings

The power to call additional meetings shall be shared by the unit's president and the executive committee. A member or a group of members may request a special meeting by writing the unit's president or the executive committee.

Section C - Order of Business

The order of business of the (MDBU) should take into consideration all aspects of business that pertains to the clubs in the unit. The unit's president shall have the authority to alter this general agenda.

- A. Call to Order.....President
- B. Invocation.....
- C. Minutes of Previous Meeting.....Secretary
- D. Correspondence.....Secretary
- E. Financial Report.....Treasurer
- F. Unfinished Business
- G. Committee Report
- H. New Business
- I. Adjournment

Section D - Quorum

A quorum for a MDBU meeting shall be at least one representative from fifty (50) percent of clubs of the unit plus one (1) additional member from any club.

Article IX Rules of Order and Amendments

Section A - Rules for Meetings

A standard publication on parliamentary procedures shall govern all meetings of the unit and of the executive committee except when contrary to mandates specified in this constitution.

Section B - Amendments to the Constitution

This constitution of the MDBU may be amended during any regular meeting by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present and voting, provided the general membership has been given a ten (10) day notice of proposed change(s).

Section C - Suspension of Constitution

This constitution may be suspended by the membership, but such suspension request must be submitted to the president of the unit in writing and must be signed by at least two-thirds (2/3) of the members in good standing. The request must be submitted not more than ten (10) days after giving notice that suspension would be requested.

Constitution Committee Members

Revised December 2006

Approved January 2010

Frank T. Hawkins, Chairperson
Lionel O. Barton
Linda Durham
Barbara Ellison
Freddie Guess
McCree, Yvonne
Clarence Richardson

Revised September 1997

Barbara Ellison, Chairperson
Yvonne McCree
Betty Johnson
Rosalie Buggs
Renetta Etter
Viola John-Lewis