

## Meeting summary for Northwest Chess Board Meeting (1/21/2024)

*Generated automatically by Zoom and edited by Eric Holcomb.*

*This meeting was scheduled as the end-of-quarter meeting for the 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter of 2023.*

*In attendance: Ralph Dubisch (at large), Wilson Gibbins (OCF), Eric Holcomb (OCF/NWC retired Business Manager), Duane Polich (WCF/NWC Publisher), Jeff Roland (ICA/NWC Editor), Josh Sinanan (WCF/NWC President), Ani Barua (WCF). The meeting was called to order at 9:05 p.m.*

## Quick recap

The team discussed financial matters, their ongoing projects, and potential changes. They also addressed concerns about the accuracy of their operations, the need for clear written instructions to prevent errors, and the idea of offering discounts for consecutive ad listings. The team also deliberated on the use of various technologies for managing tournament registrations and payments, the benefits of preregistration, and the challenges of tracking payments for tax purposes. They agreed to gradually reduce Eric's involvement (as retired business manager) in the financial aspects of Northwest Chess.

## Summary

### **Meeting Transcript, Address Update, Tax ID, and Business Model Discussion**

Eric shared the minutes from the previous meeting, which were highly detailed and needed further simplification. There was a correction needed for Ralph Dubisch's address (for the 1099-NEC tax form). Ralph agreed to send Eric the corrected address. The team also discussed their tax identification numbers. The discussions about the SettleKing (registration/membership payment system) and OCF business models were key topics from the previous meeting. Josh Sinanan mentioned that WCF would be a "guinea pig" for a new system, a point confirmed by Eric.

### **Project Updates, Payment Tracking, and Ad Rates**

The team discussed updates and changes related to their projects. The importance of tracking payments for tax purposes was highlighted, with Jeff agreeing to help Duane with tracking ad invoices and payments. There was also an issue with OCF complaining about payment delays, which the team decided to address. The need to identify all payments received into the Bank of America account was discussed, with Duane (or Josh) to create a printout like the previous year. Jeffrey Roland requested a listing of advertising rates for easy reference when invoicing clients, which Josh and Eric confirmed they had. The team agreed to create a new list, with Ralph suggesting charging proportionally for partial ad pages.

## **Operations Accuracy, Ad Discounts/Rates (cont.), and Magazine Changes**

Jeff voiced concerns about accuracy, particularly regarding ad discounts. The team agreed on the need for clear written instructions to prevent errors and Josh proposed creating a Google document to record their ad rates as a living document, which was accepted by all. The idea of offering discounts for consecutive listings was brought up but no final decision was made. The team also discussed changes to NWC magazine, with Ralph mentioning they had removed TA-style event listings (including from the published ad rates) and made other alterations.

## **Membership Processing and SettleKing Discussion**

The team discussed ongoing work on membership processing and the use of SettleKing. Josh reported that the project was still in progress and not yet operational, with expected completion within the next month or two. Eric clarified that until then, the WCF membership list would be maintained on Google to help create the mailing list. The team also discussed the need to renumber members (of OCF, ICA and other states) due to the WCF now being separate, with Eric proposing to renumber in the same order as the old numbers.

There was a discussion about the status of various databases and systems, with Eric expressing uncertainty about the use of David's online registration database for their needs. Josh confirmed that David's system would remain in use, but SettleKing would become the primary database for memberships. Ralph summarized the uncertainty about the master database, with Eric expressing relief that SettleKing was chosen over David's due to potential issues with inconsistent names and addresses. (For example, not all WCF members use online registration.) Josh concluded by saying that they were still waiting to find out whether SettleKing would work.

## **Financial Discussion and Concerns Addressed**

The team discussed their financial situation. Duane confirmed that they had around \$8,608 in the bank account and had money in PayPal, although he didn't provide an exact amount. There was uncertainty about how much of this money was from WCF advances. Ralph expressed concern about the lack of clear financial tracking and the need for a new business manager. Duane agreed to transfer money from PayPal to Bank of America and to assemble a spreadsheet for Eric, for use in preparing the annual Washington State excise and sales tax return. Josh Sinanan concluded that NWC seems to be stable financially.

[Eric subsequently received all needed income data for 2023 and prepared the state tax return.]

## **WCF Financial Discussion and Rate Adjustment Consideration**

Josh, Ralph, Duane, Eric, and Jeff discussed the financial situations of the Washington Chess Federation (WCF) and Northwest Chess (NWC). They touched upon the need for a bookkeeper and the possibility of adjusting rates for their editor and advertising. The team

agreed to revisit rate adjustments after gathering more data, especially regarding income and expenses. WCF ads in NWC magazine will continue as usual.

### **Financial Transparency**

Concerns were raised by Ralph regarding the financial implications of paying for work, referencing a past loss of Oregon (OCF) participation in NWC. Wilson Gibbins emphasized the need for transparency in financial statements to provide reassurance. The team also discussed the contributions of various members and organizations, with Eric expressing uncertainty about ownership rights.

### **Advertising Effectiveness**

The effectiveness of advertising for chess tournaments was debated, with Josh and Jeff noting the increasing number of third-party ads. Ralph expressed interest in knowing the number of people joining the Correspondence Chess League of America because of their ads and believes that NWC ad rates are low because they are a great investment for tournament advertising in the Northwest.

### **AI, SettleKing Ad, and UK Supplier Offer**

The team discussed several topics. Josh suggested asking the CEO of 9 Logic to run a SettleKing ad. Duane proposed integrating AI tools into their database, but no decision was reached. The team also shared memories of past chess tournaments and deliberated on an offer from a UK-based chess set supplier. They discussed using the offered set (valued at \$270) as a prize or accepting it as a gift, with some questioning the WCF's need for it. Eric suggested giving the supplier credit in a tournament announcement and possibly in NWC magazine.

### **Magazine Workflow, AI Artwork at Tournaments**

Jeff discussed a situation where the WCF submitted 16 complicated pages worth of raw material after the deadline for publication, so the editors decided that expanding the magazine issue from 32 to 48 pages wasn't practical. Instead, the material was saved for the next month's issue.

The conversation then shifted to the impressive AI-generated artwork seen at a recent tournament, with Josh suggesting they could use it at the WCF State Championship and Ralph mentioning the possibility of the Washington Open. Eric noted that both Adobe and Microsoft have generative AI capabilities.

### **Hall of Fame Inductee and Political Career Discussion**

Ralph announced his intention to write about the next NWC Hall of Fame inductee, Clark Harmon, for the magazine. The team discussed the need for a high-quality picture of Harmon but struggled to find one. Eric suggested looking through the John Donaldson collection, and Wilson Gibbins offered to contact Mike Morris from the Portland Chess Club. The discussion

also touched upon a chess game Jeff had played with Clark Harmon. The conversation also shifted to Bob Ferguson's political career, with Ralph mentioning that if the Democrats won, Bob, who is the Washington attorney general, could become governor. [Bob was also a chess player and former state champion, and an interview with Bob appears in the April edition of NWC magazine.]

## **Tournament Registration and Payment Solutions**

The meeting primarily focused on the challenges and potential solutions for managing tournament registrations and payments. The participants considered the use of various technologies such as near field communications and mobile payment platforms like Square or Stripe. They also discussed the benefits of preregistration for tournaments, which helps in starting the rounds on time.

## **Tax Matters Discussed**

Ralph mentioned the need to discuss tax matters with Duane, and Eric indicated his intention to gradually reduce his involvement in the financial aspects of NWC. [He is already "officially" retired but continues to assist with some tasks.] Jeff clarified his availability for certain projects. Ralph expressed confusion over a Federal E-Postcard filing requirement (for nonprofits), which Duane agreed to help him complete.

*Meeting adjourned at 10:07 p.m. [Motion by Wilson/Jeff and approved by all.]*

## **Next Steps**

- Eric will get Ralph's address correction and tax ID update (complete).
- Eric will share the minutes from the previous meeting (complete/posted online).
- Jeff will send a text to Alex to remind him about the next meeting.
- Create a Google Doc to store the ad rates as a living document (not complete).
- Find out how much NWC can afford to pay for a business manager (not complete).
- Duane will transfer PayPal money to Bank of America and get a printout/spreadsheet of 2023 transactions (complete).
- Josh will ask about running a SettleKing ad (uncertain) and follow up about the status and readiness of SettleKing for WCF use (in progress).
- The team will decide how to use the free chess set offered by Regency Chess. They will also give Regency Chess credit in a tournament announcement where the set may be offered as a prize (not complete).
- Ralph will talk to Duane about filing the Federal E-Postcard and the total income for 2023 (uncertain). NWC needs to register as a Federal (IRS) nonprofit before it can file the simple E-Postcard tax returns (not complete).