

MetroWest Chess Club Board Meeting Minutes

Approved: 2004-02-19

Kennedy Senior Center, Natick, Mass

Minutes Prepared by Harvey Reed & Mark Kaprielian

Scheduled: 7:30 PM

Opened: 7:50 PM

Closed: 12:25 PM

Board Members			Arrive	Depart	Director of Program
President	Mark Kaprielian –strong yes	Present	7:00	12:25 AM	Website
Clerk	Harvey Reed - yes	Present	7:20	12:25 AM	Marketing, News Letter
Treasurer	John Chamberlain – want to be Treasurer/Director	Present	7:35	12:25 AM	Weekly Chess Lesson
	John Bottini	Absent	-----	-----	Scholastic Tournaments
	Jim Krycka – serve as Director	Present	7:30	12:25 AM	Monthly Tournaments
	Robert Powell – weak yes	Present	7:25	12:25 AM	
	vacant				
Program Directors					
	Howard Goldowsky	Absent	-----	-----	Chess School
	Joe Kelly	Absent	-----	-----	Game Advice
	Plamen Krastev	Absent	-----	-----	Games Archive
	Matt Phelps	Absent	-----	-----	Library
Other Attendees					
	Ray Salemi – serve at pleasure	Present	7:20	12:25 AM	Nominee for Director

Note: All vote tallies are shown as For – Against – Abstention, e.g. 5 – 2 – 1

Table of Contents

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER.....	3
A. Introductory Remarks – Mark Kaprielian.....	3
B. Review of Agenda – Mark Kaprielian.....	3
II. REPORTS – OFFICERS.....	3
A. President – Mark Kaprielian.....	3
B. Treasurer – John Chamberlain.....	3
C. Clerk – Harvey Reed.....	3
III. REPORTS – PROGRAM DIRECTORS.....	3
A. Chess School – Howard Goldowsky.....	3
B. Weekly Group Lesson– John Chamberlain.....	3
C. Game Advice Program – Derek Slater & Harvey Reed.....	4
D. Library – Matthew Phelps.....	4
E. Marketing – Harvey Reed.....	4
F. Games Archive – Plamen Krastev and Harvey Reed.....	5
G. Monthly Tournament – Jim Krycka.....	5
H. Scholastics – John Bottini.....	5
I. Website – Robert Powell / Mark Kaprielian.....	5
IV. REPORTS – COMMITTEES AND OTHER INITIATIVES.....	5
A. 20 th Anniversary – Harvey Reed.....	5
B. Demographics – Mark Kaprielian.....	5
C. Facilities – Harvey Reed, Mark Kaprielian.....	6
V. TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION.....	6
A. Fill Board Vacancy – Mark Kaprielian.....	6
B. Request for Participation – Mark Kaprielian.....	7
C. Revision of Elections Policies and Procedures – Mark Kaprielian.....	7
D. Monthly Tournament – Revised Structure.....	7
E. Tournament Life Announcement motion revisited.....	7
F. Restoration of Club Championships.....	8
G. Email Lists and SPAM – Harvey Reed.....	8
H. Event Demographics – Mark Kaprielian.....	9
I. Adjournment.....	9

Meeting Called to Order

- **Introductory Remarks – Mark Kaprielian**

President Mark Kaprielian welcomed those present to the meeting.

- **Review of Agenda – Mark Kaprielian**

The following items were added to the agenda:

- **Reports – Officers**

- **President – Mark Kaprielian**

Mark stressed that this Fall of 2003 is the time to get our house in order for growth and stability. We have successfully restructured the Club at the beginning of this year, re-branded the Club with a new logo, colors, and look & feel, realigned volunteer positions, made some improvements to operations and dramatically improved marketing and member touch. On top of that we had a very successful and enjoyable 20th Anniversary celebration! This anniversary prompted collecting a ton of info on our history, including recent work on entering cross tables to give us a near complete record of all of our tournaments for the past 20 years.

We now need to review and improve our Monthly Tournaments, restart our Club Championship, prepare for elections, tighten up our use of the Senior Center facilities, rotate volunteers, and start a process of recording the accomplishments of our volunteers and members in general.

To this end, we have motions to fill vacancies, restructure our tournaments, introduce an improved Club Championship, clean up our election policies and procedures, etc. There is a lot of material to go through, but I am confident we can tackle it tonight.

- **Treasurer – John Chamberlain**

The Treasurer said he needs to fill in additional details about expenditures before he can product the Quarterly reports.

- **Clerk – Harvey Reed**

Motion_2002-10-001

Kaprielian, Krycka 2nd

To accept the draft posted minutes of the prior meeting.

Passed: 5-0-0

- **Reports – Program Directors**

- **Chess School – Howard Goldowsky**

The Final Report for the Chess School course **MCC-CS 101 Endgame Fundamentals - Held November 2002 through October 2003** had been posted to the web in the School Archive area.

The board held some general discussion about ideas for the future.

- **Weekly Group Lesson– John Chamberlain**

The Weekly Group Lesson continues to prove to be extremely popular. I have generally been structuring each month as a theme, for example tactics or strategic concepts. I have been making the classes participatory, calling on people to respond to simple questions. The attendance is up to 20 weekly. The theme database could be repackaged so that a substitute teacher could easily conduct the class.

There is currently a recurring conflict for use of the skittles room during round 1 of each Monthly Tournament. The conflict is between the Book & Equipment seller, and the Weekly Group Lesson needs. The bookseller needs to sell in the skittles room to get high pre and post-round traffic to make it worthwhile for him to come. The Weekly Group Lesson needs adequate room for the typically large crowd, and additionally the projector screen is bolted to the wall of the skittles room. Projecting on a wall or blackboard is not suitable.

I would like to discuss this with the Board to come to a suitable compromise. One possibility is to not hold the Weekly Group Lesson one Round 1. There may be other possibilities.

Game Advice Program – Derek Slater & Harvey Reed

The Game Advice program is under new leadership. Joe Kelly has silently resigned, and Derek Slater has volunteered to step in as a replacement.

Motion_2002-10-002
Reed, Powell 2nd
To appoint Derek Slater as Program Director of Game Advice.
Passed: 5-0-0

Additionally, Ray Salemi will contact Derek Slater to brainstorm how the Game Advice program can be used as part of a new member-mentoring program. This may be a catalyst to reinvigorate the Game Advise program, and promote its use in the under sections.

Library – Matthew Phelps

The Library Director reported that a donation of several boxes of chess books was made by the widow of long time member David Palmer to be used by the Club or donated to a good cause. Many of the books were retained for Club use with the rest given to the Massachusetts Chess Association for use with the Prison program or Scholastics.

Marketing – Harvey Reed

Official Merchandise (Mark Kaprielian)

At the last meeting of the Board where it was agreed that the Club would commission LL Bean to produce official Club branded items and to sell these items at cost, that is, to not try and realize any profit.

The table below summarizes the purchases to date. 12 hats and 12 T-Shirts were ordered as part the Scholastics budget for prizes.

Item Number	Item Family	Item Sex	Item Type	Item #
SQ24540	Washed Baseball Hat	---	---	18
SQ36175	Unshrinkable T-Shirt	Mens	Short Sleeve	42
SQ36184	Unshrinkable T-Shirt	Mens	Long Sleeve	4
SQ36185	Unshrinkable T-Shirt	Womens	Long Sleeve	1
SQ44828	Double L Polo	Mens	Short Sleeve	8
SQ44829	Double L Polo	Mens	Long Sleeve	4

People seem to be generally impressed with the items even if they have not yet purchased an item for themselves. Most people who place an order tend to buy more than one item at a time. The Club has several items on hand at any given time and people to buy these on impulse.

Promotion

Retrospect article was published in the October issue of Chess Life. This will serve as a record of our history, and also potentially recruit members.

20th Anniversary articles were published in the Natick TAB and the Sunday Globe West. We had recruited several new members with these articles.

The “Club Ad” started in the TLA section of the June issue of Chess Life (\$175). This ad will run 6 months. We should renew, I am recommending renewing for a year (\$300), and recommend so we do not have separate TLA ads to promote big tournaments.

This topic was discussed but action deferred until after the Monthly Tournaments proposal has been concluded. Due to the late hour of the meeting, the topic was not revisited and no action was taken.

Branding and Signage

The new website is done, logo and colors finalized, and we are using our branding for official merchandise (above), and will increase our use of the new branding in signage.

For signage, one banner has been produced and is hanging at the Club. All contract work has been completed. Adjustments to the color of the artwork and some other small changes are being worked on by Mark Kaprielian before other materials are produced.

Additionally we will print one oversize poster with branding so we can post flyers and more effectively advertise events and other Club features. We still have to decide where to hang this poster. When implemented, this can serve to reduce questions, and the amount of pre-round announcements.

Newsletter

The newsletter has received very positive feedback. In general people really like seeing a monthly recap of what happened at the Club. There is one person who does not want to receive HTML email, and has asked to be removed from the "news" list. We removed him. There has also been discussion around how to leverage the newsletter to more effectively promote the various programs we offer at the Club. Also some discussion around the concept of member classifieds, especially in regards to coaches and teachers.

Comment from Ray: We need to look for a way to promote all of the services and features of the Club.

Games Archive – Plamen Krastev and Harvey Reed

Plamen Krastev has resigned due to family issues. Eric Sonnenstuhl has volunteered to step in. Plamen remains available to mentor the new volunteers, and to complete a batch of games he has started. Harvey will continue to do the web publishing.

Motion_2002-10-003

Reed, Kaprielian 2nd

To appoint Eric Sonnenstuhl as Program Director of Games Archive.

Passed: 5-0-0

Further Steven Eddins has also volunteered to enter games. Harvey will work with Eric and Steve to assure a smooth and orderly transition.

Monthly Tournament – Jim Krycka

A subcommittee consisting of John Bottini, Mark Kaprielian and Jim Krycka has been working for several months on a revised tournament schedule. The formal proposal and support materials are being presented at this meeting. The main points of this proposal are to add a fourth section to 4 round events, make the prize money related to other factors or the particular event, and provide a means to integrate in a Club championship event, which will be proposed separately from the tournament structure proposal.

Scholastics – John Bottini

The Scholastic Tournaments wrap-up will be posted to the web soon.

An article covering the 2003 program appears on page 36 of the October - December issue of Chess Horizons magazine.

Website – Robert Powell / Mark Kaprielian

No Report

Reports – Committees and other Initiatives

20th Anniversary – Harvey Reed

Articles and photos have been posted on the web site. John is requesting reimbursement for the "Best Game" prizes.

Motion_2002-10-004

Chamberlain, Kaprielian 2nd

To approve an increase in the budget for the 2003 "Best Game" prize to a \$300 limit, to cover the actual expenses.

Passed: 5-0-0

Demographics – Mark Kaprielian

See proposal in these minutes for an overview of activities.

Facilities – Harvey Reed, Mark Kaprielian

Internet Access

Mark reported that several months ago he facilitated the ability for the Senior Center to obtain high speed Internet access by way of a grant. The grant would allow the Center to also obtain other computing items they might desire. The Director of the Center put the grant application on hold until other information about computing items that could become available through the town became finalized. As of September, the Director has decided to now go forward with the original grant proposal to obtain just the high speed internet access. The Club has a vested interest in the Center obtaining this access as it will enable us to offer other capabilities to our members as well as improve some of our administrative operations. Some possibilities are, live broadcast of one or more boards, looking up ratings on line as needed for registration. Posting of results before leaving the premises (an incorrect copy of the files, or missed update at the Club can result in a one or more days delay in the posting).

Scheduling Rooms

Mark also reported that we may have difficulty in securing Thursday nights for our use going forward. There is continuing pressure from other town groups to use the facilities. We plan on mitigating this by presenting in advance a complete calendar of our needs for Thursday nights. The possibility of claiming all Thursday nights is not possible. It should be noted that our hold on Tuesdays is strong due to the commitment of the Director to not allow us to be interfered with, despite the desire by some groups to use the occasional Tuesday night.

Harvey reported that although plans for a new site are posted on the walls at the Center, construction of the new facility is dependent on obtaining funding, which is not likely at this time.

Insurance

Harvey also reported that event insurance which we must carry as a requirement for using the facility, when up in price from \$500 to \$750 for the upcoming year. Harvey will look into the new price when he investigates Director insurance later this year.

Noise Abatement

Mark reports that the Club has purchased a noise-level monitoring device. The product is a commercially available item that has been modified specifically for use in a chess environment. The purpose of the device is to provide a means of monitoring the sound level in an area or room and provide a starkly visible and optional audio alarm when it exceeds an adjustable preset level. A one-minute warning is provided that is not as visible as when the one-minute has expired. It is anticipated that this device will be used in either the hallway or in the skittles room in the short term. In the long term, it is anticipated that if event attendance exceeds 100, that we will likely choose to use the current skittles room across that hall as the spill over playing room and the current spill over room near the front door as the skittles room. This room, near the front does not block sound very well from being heard in the main room. It will be imperative at that time that a means of keeping the noise level down. This is the primary reason for the purchase of such a device at this time. It will give us experience in deploying it and the membership time to become familiar with its use.

The company claims that their product has proven to be very effective in grade schools across the company.

An important feature to note is that single loud sounds do not trigger the change in status from good to bad.

Here are some of the details:

Product Name:	Talk Light Too
Manufacturer:	http://www.talklight.com/
Price:	\$175
Custom Modifications, design, parts and labor to incorporate a detachable strobe light on 10Ft cord	\$ 55
Cost (not including shipping)	\$225

Topics for Discussion and possible Action

Fill Board Vacancy – Mark Kaprielian

Mariel Murphy who was appointed to the board in April has since resigned her position on the board leaving the board with six members again.

Kaprielian recruited Ray Salemi to be considered for the vacancy of Director.

Motion_2002-10-005

Kaprielian, Krycka 2nd

To appoint Ray Salemi to fill the vacancy of the BOD (7th).

Passed: 5 – 0 – 0

Ray is now a member of the board and entitled to vote from this point on.

Request for Participation – Mark Kaprielian

The President asked the Board for what the anticipated level of participation will be with respect to running for the Board in the next election cycle. The relative weight of their desire to serve in the upcoming term has been recorded in the attendance area at the beginning of these minutes.

Revision of Elections Policies and Procedures – Mark Kaprielian

Mark reported that he and Harvey Reed have concluded that the current elections P&P in place do not correctly match the Articles and Bylaws that were put into place late last year. The P&P was updated shortly after the Articles and Bylaws were approved to bring them into compliance. Because we were operating under both the former rules of the MCC and the new rules of the incorporated MCC at the same time, the P&P as modified was compatible with both sets of rules, or so it seemed at the time. In preparing for this years upcoming elections, it was discovered that the Elections P&P currently in place conflict with the Bylaws and needs to be corrected to bring it into compliance.

While reviewing the governing documents, it was realized that the size of the board while presently set at 7 members minimum, has never been formally set as per the new Bylaws. It is proposed that as there currently appears to be no great influx of people desiring to be on the board and as of yet, no apparent need to increase the board, that the number of directors of the board be set to 7 for the 2004 term.

Motion_2002-10-006

Kaprielian, Reed 2nd

To set the size of the Board starting with the 2004 term to be 7 directors.

Passed: 6 – 0 – 0

Motion_2002-10-007

Kaprielian, Powell 2nd

The size of the Board shall remain fixed at whatever its value is from the start of the opening of Nominations and lasting until the end of the Annual meeting.

Passed: 6 – 0 – 0

Motion_2002-10-008

Kaprielian, Salemi 2nd

To approve the revised Election P&P as proposed for this meeting.

Passed: 6 – 0 – 0

Monthly Tournament – Revised Structure

Monthly Tournaments Program Director Jim Krycka led a discussion of the proposal and supporting materials that he and his committee members John Bottini and Mark Kaprielian have prepared.

Motion_2002-10-009

Krycka, Salemi 2nd

To approve the proposed new tournament structure as presented in section 2.5.

Passed: 6 – 0 – 0

Tournament Life Announcement motion revisited.

In December of 2000 the Board passed the following motion.

- **2000-12-14_002 5-0-0** Any Club event with a prize fund equal to or greater than \$1,000 shall be advertised in *Chess Life*.

Under this standing rule, the new event schedule accepted at this meeting would require our taking action. These being our most expensive events and with 100% prizes guaranteed, are the events we are most likely to want to change should any of our projects fall short of what was planned. Submitting these TLAs make it much more difficult to change the prizes or the sections should we need to make adjustments and will lock us in for many months in advance.

The new event schedule has only one event that is much larger than all the others. It is perhaps only this event that we may wish to advertise in *Chess Life*.

If we change the dollar amount so that only the desired events “filter through” then we are likely to be subjected to revisiting this rule again in the future when the design of the tournament schedule causes prize amounts for events to move up and down.

Since we now have a Program Director as well as a Marketing Director, we should turn the decision of which events to advertise to them. The board will have the opportunity to assess the choices made by them, on a periodic basis.

Motion_2002-10-010
Kaprielian, Krycka 2nd
To rescind motion 2000-12-14_002 “Any Club event with a prize fund equal to or greater than \$1,000 shall be advertised in *Chess Life*.”
Passed: 6 – 0 – 0 Note: A motion to rescind requires the same conditions for the vote, in this case a simple majority.

Restoration of Club Championships

Monthly Tournaments Program Director Jim Krycka and his subcommittee of John Bottini and Mark Kaprielian have prepared a plan for integrating a Club championship into the Clubs schedule.

Motion_2002-10-011
Krycka, Kaprielian 2nd
To approve the proposed Club Championships plan in section 3, with the proposed changes – a player can only earn qualification points while they are a member; and qualification requires playing at least 4 tournaments of the calendar year, while a member, where playing requires playing at least one rated game in each tournament. James Krycka will modify proposal to match.
Passed: 6 – 0 – 0

Monthly Tournaments Program Director Jim Krycka and his subcommittee of John Bottini and Mark Kaprielian have prepared a plan for integrating a Club championship into the Clubs schedule.

Motion_2002-10-012
Krycka, Kaprielian 2nd
To make a grandfather exception for the 2004 qualification cycle (2003) – for the purposes of computing membership for qualification, a player is considered to be a member for all of 2003 if the player is a member on December 31, 2003.
Passed: 6 – 0 – 0

Email Lists and SPAM – Harvey Reed

A preliminary step has been taken to reduce Club emails exposure to SPAM. Email addresses appear nowhere on the primary pages of the site in a complete manner. The information on the prefix to attach to our URL is made available wherever emails are presented. President and Webmaster Mark Kaprielian who is on every Club list reports a significant drop off in spam. He is now receiving less than 20 on average per day. Most of these tend to be from the same source producing multiples of the same email. Over time these too should stop.

Marketing Director Harvey Reed wants to eliminate SPAM completely by replacing direct email to the Club with web forms. The web form will forward the form text to the appropriate recipient and/or list. Further we will change all of the email lists to new names, and not release the new names to the public. This will guarantee that SPAMMERS will not be able to SPAM us. Tentatively Trevor De Koekkoek has volunteered to code up a .NET component to implement this, once a design ed is supplied by myself.

Event Demographics – Mark Kaprielian

Jim Krycka and Mark Kaprielian have been working on an Event Demographics database. This database has been the source of the data for the loosely organized Demographics committee. This data has also been essential for the work done by the subcommittee working on the Monthly Tournaments redesign.

The Club historical files contain the cross tables for every MCC and FCC event played with the exception of perhaps 10 or so events in the 1989, 1990 time frame. All events going back to about 1992 are in the Events Demographics database. This is due to the fact that those cross tables were available in text readable form and could be formatted and imported into the database. All records prior to 1992 are available only in PDF viewable form.

Currently this database is being used to do planning and is intended to be used to generate the qualifying status for the anticipated new Club Championships. It can also be used for recognition of the recent past performance records, such as most wins, longest winning streak, etc.

It is being proposed that we commit some funds to assist in getting the PDF only data into a form that can be imported into the database. There are some technology issues that need to be examined but it is anticipated that some amount of manual correction, entry or verification of the data will be required. This is the reason for the requested funding. The funding would go to some person or persons willing to undertake the manual tasks. It is intended that we would solicit help from the Junior members of our Club as an opportunity for them to earn some pocket money.

Some of the anticipated benefits of having a complete historical record are:

- The ability to provide a web page where any member can get a complete history of whom they have played at the Club with date, event, result and other data.
- The ability for the Club to create recognition awards for things such as most games played at the Club, most wins, years at the Club, etc.
- A more complete attendance trend and other historical aspects of attendance.

There are approximately 10 years worth of cross tables with approximately 10 tournaments per year.

Motion_2002-10-013

Kaprielian, Krycka 2nd

To authorize a rate of \$2.50 per cross table for the anticipated manual intensive effort to correct, enter or verify the cross table data. These funds to be administered by Mark Kaprielian.

Passed: 6 – 0 – 0

Adjournment

Motion_2002-10-014

Salemi, Powel 2nd

To Adjourn.

Passed: 6-0-0