

# President's Report 2019 Annual Meeting

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## I. Purpose

This report provides an overview of the status of the club and its activities for the preceding year. The President of the club, Matt Phelps, will present and discuss this report with the membership at the Annual meeting of the club to be held on Tuesday, January 22nd, 2019. A summary is presented first with more discussion and details provided in the sections that follow.

## II. Summary

The club continues to be in decent shape. Still not the shape we would like it to be in, but able to continue on in the fashion we've become accustomed to under the conditions of our current site.

Overall monthly attendance has declined from our average of the mid-70s for the past three years. There are many possible explanations for this decline. The most likely in my view is that there were four months where we had tournaments of less than four rounds. However, it is also clear from informal discussions and polling that our continued lack of "slow chess" still hurts attendance.

The Group Class program continues under coordinator, Bob Trieber. John Chamberlain, NM Matthew Fishbein, NM Alan Song, and NM Rob King gave lessons this year. The recording of lessons for YouTube abated this past year due mainly to Rob's diminished role.

We continue to ask the membership to please consider the time pressure the staff is under and listen to our prompting at the end of the evening. To please help by picking things up, putting away club sets and help us get things done quickly, calmly and very importantly for all of us, pleasantly.

There are many opportunities for people to assist in both very small and great ways. I encourage you to consider if you can provide time to assist the club either while at the club or away from the club. Once again our TD pool is a bit thin. Please contact one of the existing TDs if you are interested in becoming an official USCF TD. Remember, TDs get free entry to all MCC events!

## III. Club relocation status

There were a few "nibbles" in the Club's efforts to locate permanent space, however none of those came close to fruition this year. The leasing rates for space in the MetroWest area have risen over the past year considerably. It has become more and more evident that we will not be able to afford to lease space 24/7. We will continue to look, but prospects are not good.

Considering this, we re-commenced a search for alternate Tuesday night rental space (as opposed to a permanent lease space) and have found a very promising lead. I will report in more depth in a separate presentation.

#### **IV. The past year**

The past year has been a challenge for the club. We continue to operate under the restriction of the Town of Natick, and must all be out of the Community Center by 10:00 PM. This of course limits us to G/60 for our monthly tournaments. Several times in 2018 the site was unavailable to us on a Tuesday night due to elections, snow cancellations, or holidays.

Attendance throughout the year dropped to an average of 66 per month, down from the past three years in the mid 70s. Prior to our having to change to G/60 our average was 82 for the past 12 years. Most of this decline was in the last few months of 2018 due to election and holiday site closures.

Club membership levels have also dipped to below 100.

The DGT boards /Game Archive /Live Broadcast program continues to be on hold.

#### **V. Observations**

Little has changed from the operations standpoint of the club since last year. We continue to pull in several new players (both new to the club, and new to rated chess) per year.

We are still doing a good job getting rounds to start on time. Thankfully, we still haven't had the situation of a game still going on when it was time to leave the building.

The Open section continues to decline in strength and numbers. This is likely due to our restriction to G/60.

#### **VI. New Projects**

##### **Credit Card Payments**

We now accept credit cards on-site for tournament entry, US Chess memberships, and Club memberships. The technology in use (SquareSpace) also allows us to accept Apple Pay and Google Pay.

##### **Advertising**

We have recently begun listing our tournaments on the MACA site again. We hope to increase our Social Media presence via facebook, twitter, and Instagram.

#### **VII. The Future**

##### **Relocation**

We have re-concentrated our efforts on acquiring a new site for rental on just Tuesday nights. We have a promising prospect that will allow us to resume our old time control of 40/90; SD/30; d5. I will give a separate presentation on it. Many of our future plans rely on us having more time on Tuesday nights.

### **Group Class**

The Group Class program lost a bit of its momentum from last year, but still has a bright future if we can pick it up. The recording, and posting online, of the lessons can improve the stature of the Club. We will purchase appropriate equipment, and establish documented procedures, so these recordings can continue when personnel involved changes.

### **Forming a 501c(3) Charitable Foundation**

In the previous year, we had planned to form a 501c(3) charitable foundation as a separate corporation from that of the club. This will allow us to accept tax deductible donations and perhaps initiate several fundraising efforts. This project was basically on hold as our prospects of finding permanent lease space became more and more remote. In fact a corporation was created with the state, but no further follow-up was done. We plan on picking this up again in 2019.

### **DGT boards/Game Archive/Live Broadcast**

The Club's stock of DGT boards has been sold to Boston Premier Chess. We plan on purchasing several of the new DGT Smart boards, which are cheaper, lighter, and a bit easier to use than the older wooden ones. Again, if we get a site where we can have longer nights, we hope to resume this effort.

### **Online Entry**

Again, this project has been on hold pending resolution of the club's future home. The advent of credit card acceptance may tie into a system for online entry. We will pick this up again soon.