

HOLLAND CHORALE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
APRIL 6, 2020
ZOOM MEETING DUE TO COVID-19

PRESENT: Pam Wells (President), Jean Lemmenes (Vice President), Julie Anderson (Treasurer), Sally Zenas (Secretary) Mihai Craioveanu, Terri Borgman, Maura Reynolds, Pam Pierson, Carol Zeh, Patrick Coyle (Artistic Director), Betty McLarty (Operations Manager)

ABSENT: Ruth Hofmeyer, Jennifer Brunk (Development Director)

CALL TO ORDER: Meeting called to order via Zoom by President Pam Wells at 7:00 pm.

MINUTES MARCH 2, 2020: The minutes were approved as submitted and are posted on the board website.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT:

GNFS UPDATE: Grand Night for Singing, the major fundraiser for the Holland Chorale, has been cancelled for May 2020 due to COVID-19. Discussion of postponing GNFS until October 2020 is problematic because of other Chorale events: Adventures in Harmony (10/6/20) and, we hope, the 60th Anniversary concert originally scheduled for March, now rescheduled for 10/18/20. A “Non-Event Event” virtual fundraiser in September was discussed as a possible way to kick-off the season. Terri stated that organizing an event for August was not feasible. If there is a virtual event, Patrick advised that we look at profits of last two fundraisers, establish a net amount needed, and find a way to get there.

Alena Howard, co-chair of GNFS, has resigned because she is moving to Cleveland. Co-chair, Terri Borgman, needs another co-chair; the job is too big for one person. Pam W. asked Terri to find out from Alena exactly what has been done to date and what is left to do. The venue, Laketown Conference Center, will honor our deposit of \$500 only through the end of 2020. Patrick will contact them and ask for an extension beyond 12/20 given the uncertainty of the pandemic.

DEVELOPMENT UPDATE: Jennifer Brunk’s report is attached. She also recommends an online virtual fundraising event and is willing to help with it. The Prince Foundation \$7,500 donation for 2020 does not need to be returned and can be used for current operating expenses.

OUTREACH TO MEMBERS AND SUPPORTERS UPDATE: Alena Howard joined the Executive Committee via telephone. Because she had worked with an arts organization that experienced the devastation of hurricane Katrina, she emphasized how important it is to immediately reach out to members, sponsors, patrons, and donors to connect with them during uncertain times. She divided her suggestions into three stages, all of which should be acted upon sooner, rather than later:

1. Address immediate needs: Salaries, Music, Venues

2. Check in with top donors NOW. A) Have board members call them just to check in. B) Do not ask for ANYTHING, simply connect. C) Share what measures the Chorale has taken in response to the crisis. D) If asked, be prepared to share what the needs are now.
3. Communicate with donors, sponsors, advertisers, ticketholders and members: A) Offer joy. B) This is how we are supporting/loving our community RIGHT NOW (Think video outreach). C) If people ask how they can help, offer suggestions (Purchase 2020-2021 season tickets NOW, make an additional donation).

Patrick shared what his Grand Rapids church is doing to reach out to their members weekly in an uplifting manner. Patrick and Carol will work together to build on this idea, using social media and previous Chorale recordings to communicate with supporters on a regular basis. Maura suggested using a catchy name such as Musical Mondays.

SMALL BUSINESS LOAN UPDATE: Julie has applied for a PPP forgivable small business loan from the government in the amount of \$10,000 through Macatawa Bank to cover payroll for 8 weeks. After she filed the application and attended a webinar, she was advised that independent contractors might not qualify. She hopes to learn by the end of this week if the Holland Chorale is eligible for this loan. Without the loan, Julie said we could get through the summer, but there would be no cash left to start the season in the fall.

This information led to a discussion on staff salaries. Pam stated that she would like to keep staff (Artistic Director, Accompanist, Operations Manager) on the payroll because we value them and want them to stay. Should it be necessary to make budget cuts, the Executive Committee will make recommendations to the board of directors, who will then vote on the recommendations.

Patrick clarified that his contract goes through July 30, 2020. Kristin Baron was hired January 14, 2020 as accompanist. Her contract is open-ended. She is salaried and the stipend amount is divided by 12 months. Patrick also said there is usually language in contracts which stipulates how contracts are ended.

The Executive Committee will meet next week to address these emergency realities. An additional board meeting may be required before the scheduled meeting in May.

Carol brought to our attention that the NEA has a stimulus package available for arts organizations in need, and Mihai mentioned that the Michigan Council for the Arts may have funds available for emergency situations. The Executive Committee will look into these possibilities.

BOOKKEEPER RESIGNATION: Mary Benedict informed the Executive Committee that she will resign her position no later than April 19, 2020. Betty McLarty has agreed to learn Quickbooks and, with Julie's help, handle the bookkeeping duties for now.

TREASURER'S REPORT: The current checkbook balance is \$29,528.67. One year ago the balance was \$25,508.73. The current checkbook balance does not include money due Jennifer Brunk for development, or the expected income from the MCACA grant in July. There also may be \$2,500 coming from the CEP grant request. Stretching our money during the unknown length of our "Stay Home, Be Safe" isolation is necessary, and exploring creative ways to increase income is essential. Patrick shared an email he received from the Cincinnati Mens Chorus asking for money during this dire time for the

arts. Their email was strongly worded and stated that they need \$10,000 now to survive. Patrick will send this email to Pam W., and she will make modifications so that we can send our supporters a similar email.

OPERATIONS MANAGER'S REPORT: Betty's report is attached. Because two big concerts and a fundraiser were cancelled since the last board meeting, she spent more than her normal hours doing housekeeping for those events. She applied for a \$5,000 Community Enhancement Program (CEP) grant; Macatawa Area Coordinating Council approved a \$2,500 grant for the Chanticleer concert. Since the Chanticleer concert has been cancelled, she has written a request that the funds be used in support of the 60th Anniversary Concert rescheduled for October 18, 2020.

WORKING BOARD UPDATES:

ARTISTIC COMMITTEE: Patrick reported that the committee hopes to recreate the 60th Anniversary Legacy of Song concert on October 18, 2020. He will contact previous directors and try to arrange the same things that were in place for the March concert.

The committee recommends that the Holiday Concert plans stay as previously planned.

The planned *Beethoven Meets the Beatles* previously scheduled for October 2020 will be moved to spring 2021.

Patrick would like to go forward with a West Coast Festival in the Spring 2021 featuring Anton Armstrong. He suggests we try for a combined concert with Chanticleer in the future when they are on tour, possibly 2022.

OPERATIONS COMMITTEE: Carol reported that no members asked for their dues back even though the second semester was cancelled due the pandemic.

Once we are able to gather safely in groups and real plans can be made to begin a new season, Carol suggests a celebration kick-off party. She has contacted Amons and they have agreed to serve as hosts. Everyone agreed that it will be a great morale booster.

ADVENTURES IN HARMONY: Pam Pierson had to leave the meeting early but sent questions prior to the meeting (see attached). Board members agreed that she should assume that AIH will happen as scheduled October 6, 2020.

STRATEGIC PLANNING: Jean reported that she and Patrick are working on a stopgap strategic plan for the website. They will consult the old strategic plan, set some goals in the areas of Finance, Art, Technology and Education (FATE), and Jean will make it look fresh on the website. Jean will talk to Pam P. to address the MCACA recommendations.

COMMUNICATIONS/MARKETING: Carol reminded us that it is important to cut corners wherever possible right now. One way is to look at advertising income and printed program booklet expense. She questioned whether the ads cover the printing costs.

Carol has agreed to continue providing graphics and taking care of necessary printing until the future is less uncertain.

Carol also suggested that we not spend money now on updating the website. She has offered to change the theme and make some website changes herself.

GRANTS: Pam P. reminded us that someone needs to shadow her this year so that person can take over filing grant applications next year. Patrick has mentioned this to Gene Gess and will follow-up with him. Pam also cautioned against assuming that income from MCACA would be substantial; it's wise to assume that MCACA will have a smaller budget for grants next year.

NEW BOARD MEMBERS: Jenny DeGraves may be interested in serving on the board. Her CV is attached. Jean will contact her with hopes that she will receive board approval at the next meeting. Jean also suggests that we add more males to the board.

INDIVIDUAL FUNDRAISING: Mihai cautioned that we should be sensitive about asking for money as we go forward. Due to businesses being shut down, people will be hurting financially.

GOOD WILL AMBASSADOR: All agreed that now is a good time to reach out with heartfelt thank you notes. Some suggestions for Terri were: First Reformed Church, Alena Howard, Abby Blystra (?), Chris Urbanek, Nick DeVries, Mary Benedict, former directors (Cal Langejans, Gary Bogle, Ryan Kelly, Meredith Bowen). Sally and Mihai will help if needed. Please contact Terri with suggestions.

Meeting adjourned at 9:07 pm.

Sally Zenas, Secretary
Maura Reynolds, Secretary-in-waiting

ATTACHMENTS: 1) To Do List, 2) Development Report, 3) Op. Manger Report, 4) CV Jenny DeGraves, 5) Pam Pierson Report, 6) Arts Help MI, 7) NEA Financial Help,

Next Concert: TBD

NEXT MEETINGS:

Executive Committee – TBD BY PAM WELLS - **SOON** - BEFORE SCHEDULED EC MEETING APRIL 19.

Board of Directors – Scheduled for May 4, 2020 - 7:00 - ZOOM or Links Clubhouse. MAY BE SOONER. **WATCH YOUR EMAIL.**