

Holland Chorale Board Meeting  
Monday, February 7, 2022  
7 pm via Zoom

Attending: Keon Atkins; Tom Busa; Patrick Coyle; Mihai Craioveanu; Jenny DeGraves; Jean Lemmenes; Betty McLarty; Mike Pikaart; Maura Reynolds; Sarah VandenBrink; Carol Zeh

Absent: Julie Anderson; Mark DeWitt

Jean called the meeting to order at 7:07 pm.

- Minutes of the January 3, 2022, board meeting were approved as submitted. Tom moved; Sarah seconded.
- There were no additions to the agenda.
- **Executive Committee and President's report** (report posted separately)
  - a. Board member recruitment. The board voted to welcome Mike Pikaart to the board (Carol moved; Jenny seconded). Jean will talk with Mike about possible roles on the board. Connie Tuma who was asked to join the board has declined but will be happy to serve on the Grand Night for Singing committee (though not chair it). Jean is waiting to hear from Steve Hook about joining the board.
  - b. Covid policy update. Executive committee clarified the policy:  
*I have not been exposed to someone who has a suspected case or confirmed case of the COVID-19 in the past 10 days. Clarification Note: If the exposure is from someone with my household, the date of the positive test will be used as the date of exposure regardless of whether or not I have tested negative.*
  - c. Discussion of MCACA review of grant scores (documents posted online). Jenny noticed that several of the comments encouraged the Chorale to do more outreach and highlighted diversity, equity, and inclusion. Tom agreed: diversity in the audience as well as in the singers was important. Carol observed that some of the reviewers' comments were contradictory (praise for the website/concern about the website). Jean noticed that the reviewers stressed the importance of an audience survey; Carol has a copy of a survey we intended to use at the cancelled 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary concert. Patrick volunteered to revise the survey so it would be appropriate for the upcoming concert; Sarah will be involved as well because of her responsibility with community engagement. A separate sheet will be included with the handout; Carol and Betty will handle the logistics of including it with the program handout. We may use comp tickets we get from Holland Symphony as prizes (if survey takers provide their emails).
  - d. Future staffing needs. Jean raised two questions: Knowing we have a limited budget, what is our priority? And what could a marketing position look like for the Holland Chorale; what should it include? We are a working board, but some members are over-burdened. Julie's role as treasurer has expanded to include bookkeeping among other things; Carol has taken on too many roles—especially since she will be president next year; Jean's role as president has expanded to include development and more. In the past, we have hired others to handle some of this work. Given our financial situation, we may not be able to hire staff or contract people. How can we handle this?

- Keon feels that we need to delineate what each potential job involves. Can some be taken on by others?
- Carol believes that it is important to contract a professional graphic designer.
- Patrick believes that marketing involves expanding our audience; given the work that goes into each concert, he believes our audience should be larger.
- Tom encourages us to realize that if we can grow our audience, we can (in the future) afford to fund an expanded position: return on investment is key as we make these decisions.
- Mike believes that Carol is describing a communication (rather than marketing) position.
- Carol reminds us that if we hire someone, we need to be able to follow up on whatever the person suggests, and this will involve expense.
- Betty wonders who our audience is and who we are trying to reach: we need to answer these questions before we think about hiring.
- Jean wonders if there is a way to connect the communication and marketing functions. Is it possible to create a position involving both areas?
- Tom tells us that marketing involves promoting and selling our brand; communication involves story telling.
- Mike reminds us that we need to think about how to expand our current audience.
- Sarah thinks it would be helpful to have Carol list what she does currently and see if some could be delegated to others.

In closing, Carol stressed the importance of making sure that whoever would be hired understands the Chorale, has some understanding of music, etc. Jean hopes to narrow down our needs. Do we agree with Patrick that marketing is the most important position to support? Jean is not able to continue handling development; Julie is doing the work of an accountant, rather than a treasurer. Tom reminds us that some of our job responsibilities may be filled by non-board members. Jean reports that we also need to recruit and develop Chorale board members: this is listed as part of the vice-president's jobs. Covid has upended things: many of the decisions have had to be made quickly, in a knee-jerk way.

Carol believes the operations committee needs to be reconstituted; they used to meet regularly, take on projects. Patrick wonders if the operation chair/committee should be renamed the singer engagement committee. This would resolve the confusion between the Operations Manager (Betty's position) and the Operations Committee (made up of singers). There was support for Patrick's idea; however, Carol believes that this committee involves more than singer engagement. Jean thanked everyone for a fruitful discussion. This discussion will go to the Executive Committee who will hopefully bring back a recommendation to the board.

- e. Financial development report. Request Foods and the Padnos family have been asked for \$5,000 each in support of the March concert. They were asked in January but have not responded. Jean will follow up.
- f. Current projects/events in planning stages
  - *Beethoven Meets the Beatles* concert

- Development/sponsorship revisions—sub-team meeting by end of the month
- **Treasurer’s report** (posted separately). There is not much change from the December report. Part of the MCACA grant has been received. The discrepancies between Julie’s report on giving and Betty’s have been resolved.
- **Artistic director’s report** (posted separately) It’s been challenging to rehearse since singers have not always been able to attend rehearsals. Patrick doesn’t believe that the March concert is in jeopardy, but he recognizes the need to be realistic and pragmatic if changes must be made. Singers are working hard. Originally, we had promised 50 singers for the concert with the Holland Symphony; Chorale has 40 singers. Kay Walvoord has asked Patrick to recruit other singers. The logistics will be tricky and involve preparation, Covid precautions, issues of working with current Chorale, among others.

Pam Pierson has stepped down from her position as Coordinator for *Adventures in Harmony*. Patrick and Jean have thanked her for her volunteer work on behalf of the Chorale. Sarah VandenBrink and Patrick will discuss other prospects for this leadership role, then proceed with approaching them.

- **Operation manager’s report** (posted separately). Betty is working on licenses and, if she gets them, we can stream the numbers.
- **Working board updates:**
  - a. Operations committee chair: Carol Zeh. Carol is getting ready for the concert; getting posters and postcards prepared—waiting to hear about any sponsors. She will begin email blasts when things are more settled.
  - b. Communications/Marketing: Carol Zeh
  - c. Philanthropy service: Mark DeWitt
  - d. Community engagement (including *Adventures in Harmony*): Sarah VandenBrink. Things are moving. She and Patrick have met to talk about a new chair for *Adventures in Harmony*.
  - e. Diversity, equity, and inclusion ambassador: Keon Atkins. No updates. Jean asks Keon to learn more about how DEI can be incorporated into the MCACA grant since several of the reviewers mentioned it. Betty will send Keon a copy of the grant narrative.
  - f. Strategic planning champion: Tom Busa. As Keon works more with DEI, Tom will be available to update the strategic plan.
  - g. GNFS co-chair: This position remains open.
  - h. Good will ambassador: Maura (temporary) Carol suggests that Bill and Norma Ashby be thanked for cleaning out the storage room. Patrick suggests that Phyllis Miner and John Griffin be thanked for filling in as accompanists when Kristen was out sick.
  - i. Individual fundraising coordinator: Mihai Craioveanu No report.
  - j. Legal and grant assistance: Jenny DeGraves Jenny looked at a Chorus America grant possibility: groups in Michigan were not eligible. Jenny will follow up with other grants with Chorus America. Members were encouraged to let Jenny know of any other grant opportunities.

Next concert/event:     March 27, 2022 *Beethoven Meets the Beatles*  
 Next meetings:         Executive committee—Sunday, February 27 (time tba)  
                                Board meeting—Monday, March 7, 2022, 7 pm via Zoom