

## 31 August 2016 MCS Board Meeting

MaryEllen Murray, Myrna Tichenor, Bob Clay, Bob Vieira, Pres. Brian Girouard, Peter Hobson, Director Brian Gilbertie, Renelle Hebert, Linda Lue Leiserson. Chris Ferguson, and Cassie Kovacs.

Minutes from last month - No changes. accepted - unanimous

Review agenda - add Woburn 375th please

Renelle met with the chairperson: Kathy Lucero. They want us to sing. Music person, Lynn Burns, was not there. Renelle has not heard back from her. At the event, each group would do a number of their own and then perform another number with all the groups together. January 8th (Sunday) 2pm First Congregational Church, Woburn. expecting 800 - 900 people. Not sacred. More of a patriotic event. Renelle is hoping to hear more by middle of September.

Some discussion about possible selections

Renelle looked over some of our music and gave some suggestions to Director Brian.

Bob Clay - members need to have this promoted.

We have been invited to join the Greater Boston Choral Consortium. The main advantage to this would be exposure. We would also gain access to info and surveys. Would require active participation of one or more members of the board. We were members of the group 4 or 5 years ago.

Bob V. - Let's task Myrna with getting more information. Myrna agrees.

Dues- Director Brian did some sleuthing and found that we are charging less than other choruses in the area. Most other choruses charge a minimum of \$100 for the year or greater. At present, we are charging \$80. Area average is \$171 per annum, Pres. Brian proposes that we raise our dues to \$50 per half year.

Bob Clay- Does everyone pay his/her dues now? Does anyone find it to be a strain?

Renelle compared our dues to community classes. Each rehearsal is \$3.85. A craft class would be \$20-30 and one must bring materials.

To Bob V. - would this make it more difficult to collect? answer- no.

Pres. Brian plans to announce it as \$50 per season or per concert.

Director Brian- is there any concern about people being surprised, i.e no warning? Perhaps. Pres. Brian can send out an email announcing the increase.

Pre. Brian- when did we last raise our dues? At least 2-3 years.

MaryEllen- It's more about how it's presented to the chorus.

Vote to raise dues to \$50 per season/concert. Unanimous.

Financial report from Bob V. For the first time in a long time we are in the black. There was an anonymous donation earmarked for new music. We have about \$1900 in the treasury. Cash flow report handed out. (L3 asks Bob to send e-copy so that the report can be attached to the minutes.)

also, there was an anonymous donation from a bartender to Pres. Brian.

Pres. Brian to Bob V- please be prepared to present this to the membership.

Proposed slate of officers handed around. Thank you MaryEllen and Bob Clay for being willing to serve! Hoping they will serve as members-at-large, but there are openings for Secretary, Librarian, and Vice President. No pressure :-)

Bob Vieira will not sing with the chorus this season. He will continue to serve as treasurer, but would like a new treasurer to step in for the next fiscal year. He will need someone to collect dues. Renelle volunteers.

re: Music Librarian: Shall we fill the gap with a group effort? Should pre. Brian try to pull from the membership for assistance? He would like at least two people in order to reduce the burden.

Renelle– showed the folders for our Meet and Greet Table. She is ready to assign new numbers. We are trying to keep this as simple as possible! We may want the Meet and Greet table for two weeks.

Pre. Brian– should we have returning members hand in their music every week? Answer: no because they have always kept their music.

Cassie– Loves this idea. Some people might be upset to lose their old numbers. They'll get over it. And this will make librarian duties much more streamlined.

Director Brian– attendance policy. Members who will miss more than two rehearsal need to approach Director Brian or Renelle. Final decision is Brian's. There are some members who have prior commitments once a month. There is room for this, but there should be communication.

Dir. Brian– We should share the thought process for this new document.

Bob Clay– this has to do with quality for the performance.

Renelle– Some members travel for business . . . Just use the message function on the web site please.

Pre. Brian– people are already letting Renelle and/or Pres. Brian about rehearsals that they will have to miss.

Renelle– intent is not to be hard on the membership. But there have been repeat offenders. Some members have been known to record the rehearsals when they have to miss.

Open Rehearsals – many members mis-interpret this as 'optional'. Calling September Newcomer Nights might help clarify this.

Peter– Little of this is new.

Pres. Brian wants to call it "updated" instead of "new"

Director Brian– already has much of the music in his car. Transferred it to Chris and Cassie's car tonight.

Renelle shared the handout about Amazon Smile, Banquet, liking us on Facebook.

Brief pause.

Compensation– When was the last time we gave Sarah an increase? - two years. It is shorter since we gave Brian a raise. At present we are paying them per hour: regular rehearsal 2 hours, dress rehearsal 3 hours, concert 4 hours. Brian receives \$70 per hour. Sarah receives \$55 an hour. Last year this totaled just short of \$10,000. We can handle an increase to both of them this year. How does this compare to similar choruses? Bob V. would like their compensation to be in the top third. Suggestion to increase in \$5 per hour increments. \$5 increase would add about \$750 expenditure.

Pre. Brian says it's a bargain as it is.

Vote to increase each salary by \$5 an hour. Voted. Unanimously passed.

Pres. Brian will inform them of their raises.

Pres. Brian would like the board to meet briefly Tuesday the 6th to vote on the new slate of officers.

Other business

Bob Clay\_ notices that we see new people, but they don't stay. Could we meet up with them to give information, get information . . . ?

Renelle– suggestion to have mentors. Elliot has told her that he would be happy to serve in this capacity.

MaryEllen– some people are shy and this could be off-putting.

Cassie– Can we designate some 'ambassadors' who would greet and offer help. Could we have an on-line survey?

Peter– Sometimes they find that they are not a good fit (may not read music) so it's not something we are doing wrong or not doing.

Renelle– wish we had better follow up to know people's reactions. Director Brian has expressed some concern that he is not drawing people in. This was generally disagreed with.

'Huddle' idea for approaching visitors during rehearsal break. or Should we create a written survey?

How did they find us?

Please rate the friendliness, music selection . . .

How 'bout if all of the officers take it upon themselves to welcome newcomers? interview instead of survey.

Pres. Brian will email the board with highlights from this discussion. Board members can join the email discussion and add new thoughts.

Please add Bob and MaryEllen to board email list.

Bob Clay– We are concerned about income. Ticket sales are a significant portion of our income. Last year, we struggled with the person at the door not knowing how to perform the task. We also need an accurate head count. Peter has a clicker. Let's continue this discussion!

Chris - would like to do a Face-Book ad – 'boost' a post. Long discussion - pros and cons. Let's do it for one week around the first rehearsal.

Meeting adjourned.