

**Lawrence Civic Choir  
Board Retreat  
Minutes  
January 10, 2004**

**Present:** Lois Orth-Lopes, Jeanine Morton, Margaret Holdeman, Larry Mallett, Elaine McCullough, Fred Johnson, Marlene Merrill, Matt Veatch, Steve Eubank, Robert J. Vaughan, Gloria Baker

**1 Fundraising**

- 1.1 Lois called attention to Gloria's email reporting on her fund raising activities.

**2 Treasurer's report**

- 2.1 Lois expressed the board's deep appreciation for all of Jeanine's hard work in getting the LCC treasury in order.
- 2.2 Jeanine distributed a treasurer's report and expressed her view that she wanted this and future treasurer's reports to be meaningful to board members.
- 2.3 Jeanine summarized the report for the board.
  - 2.3.1 She noted that the budget was out of balance by \$770 and she asked Marlene how those funds should be allocated.
    - 2.3.1.1 Marlene indicated that the funds should be placed in an Other Income category.
  - 2.3.2 Jeanine noted that the grocery certificates income had been overestimated in the past few reports.
  - 2.3.3 Jeanine observed that she had observed some potential problems with the salary distribution to Geoff Wilcken.
    - 2.3.3.1 Jeanine asked Marlene and Lois to provide her with information on Geoff's salary.
    - 2.3.3.2 Marlene commented that in addition to a base salary, the board had agreed to pay Geoff additional money for any extra rehearsals and performances.
    - 2.3.3.3 **Action:** Marlene will provide Jeanine with the necessary information on Geoff's salary.
  - 2.3.4 Jeanine noted that the LCC had raised 2/3 of its income for the year and had only spent 53% of anticipated expenses.
  - 2.3.5 Assets
    - 2.3.5.1 Jeanine reported that the LCC owns an American General annuity.
      - 2.3.5.1.1 The annuity was in Jeff Morphew's name and because of his death the annuity now has to be cashed in.
      - 2.3.5.1.2 Jeanine is in the process of cashing in the annuity.
    - 2.3.5.2 Capitol Federal Certificate of Deposit
      - 2.3.5.2.1 Jeanine reported that she had discovered that the LCC has a \$750 CD with Capitol Federal.
      - 2.3.5.2.2 To date, she has been unable to get Capitol Federal to provide her with full information about the CD.
      - 2.3.5.2.3 **Action:** Jeanine asked Matt to send her a signed copy of the minutes of the meeting at which she was appointed treasurer.
    - 2.3.5.3 Jeanine observed that the choir possessed several assets that were not listed on the treasurer's report including:
      - 2.3.5.3.1 Unsold t-shirts
      - 2.3.5.3.2 Unsold grocery certificates
      - 2.3.5.3.3 Unsold folders
      - 2.3.5.3.4 **Action:** Jeanine will determine the value of each of these assets and list them on future reports.
  - 2.3.6 Fund raising
    - 2.3.6.1 Jeanine summarized fund raising figures.
    - 2.3.6.2 She commented that the LCC was \$800 in the hole on the NYC trip.
      - 2.3.6.2.1 **Action:** She will work with Judy Veatch to determine the reason for this.
    - 2.3.6.3 She also stated that she wanted to get a better handle on the grocery certificate purchases and sales.

### **3 Spring concerts and rehearsal dates**

- 3.1 The LCC will perform its Spring Concert at Free State High School on Saturday, April 24, 2004, 8:00 p.m.
  - 3.1.1 The dress rehearsal for this concert will occur on Friday, April 23, 2004.
- 3.2 Baldwin concert
  - 3.2.1 The choir will perform the Mozart Requiem a second time on Sunday, April 25, 2004, in Baldwin.
- 3.3 Sesquicentennial Concert
  - 3.3.1 Matt reported that he had seen an email message listing the LCC as one of several groups interested in performing as part of Lawrence sesquicentennial celebration (September 18<sup>th</sup>).
    - 3.3.1.1 Andi stated that she had not heard about this but she was not in favor of performing in an outdoor venue.
    - 3.3.1.2 Steve commented that he did not like singing outdoors but that if the other groups were going to perform the LCC should consider doing so as well.

### **4 Announcements**

- 4.1 Lois reported that Mike Boring had resigned from the board.
- 4.2 Music library
  - 4.2.1 Andi reported that Jean might sell her house in the near future and the music library would need to be moved to the Veatch's.
    - 4.2.1.1 Matt stated that Judy Veatch already had started the transfer process.
    - 4.2.1.2 Margaret, Jeanine, and Andi volunteered to help with the move.
  - 4.2.2 Lois observed that the music library was an LCC asset and should be valued and insured.

### **5 Future direction of LCC discussion**

#### **5.1 Concept of season**

- 5.1.1 By semester (Fall season, Spring season, ?Summer season)
  - 5.1.1.1 Pros
    - 5.1.1.1.1 Marlene: More predictable for dues paying
    - 5.1.1.1.2 Steve: Flexible for our membership
    - 5.1.1.1.3 Jeanine: Allows for natural breaks
    - 5.1.1.1.4 Marlene: Minimal time commitment
    - 5.1.1.1.5 Steve: Lawrence a community centered on college semester schedule.
    - 5.1.1.1.6 Margaret: New members can be added each semester.
    - 5.1.1.1.7 Steve: Facilitates giving academic credit for choir members.
  - 5.1.1.2 Cons
    - 5.1.1.2.1 Marlene: Doesn't generate continuity.
    - 5.1.1.2.2 Jeanine: Makes long term planning more difficult.
    - 5.1.1.2.3 Jeanine: Currently pay director/accompanist on a monthly basis but the schedule is irregular.
    - 5.1.1.2.4 Matt: Director can't plan for summer concerts.
- 5.1.2 By year (Fall through Spring and perhaps Summer)
  - 5.1.2.1 Pros
    - 5.1.2.1.1 Lois: Facilitates public relations flyer for fund raising
    - 5.1.2.1.2 Margaret: For planning purposes, the year concept makes a lot of sense.
    - 5.1.2.1.3 Marlene: Fundraising requires advanced planning.
  - 5.1.2.2 Cons
    - 5.1.2.2.1 Margaret: Members likely reluctant to make long-term commitment.
- 5.1.3 Summary
  - 5.1.3.1 Lois stated that the group seemed to be in agreement that the board needed to plan for a year.
    - 5.1.3.1.1 She observed that if this is the direction the board chose to go, then by the end of the spring, the board would need to have concert dates set for the next fall and next spring.
    - 5.1.3.1.2 Margaret and Elaine observed that some flexibility would need to be included in this process.

- 5.1.3.2 Larry commented that the group seemed to be in agreement about the need to plan a year in advance for the fall and spring but that long-range planning for the summer lacked consensus.
  - 5.1.3.2.1 Steve commented that the summer is a very different time and that it is difficult to get commitments from members.
  - 5.1.3.2.2 Marlene observed that summers often involved a trip, an extra concert, etc. but the real issue was the predictability of the level of participation in summer activities.
  - 5.1.3.2.3 Margaret observed that one key issue was how to get commitment from members for summer activities.
  - 5.1.3.2.4 Elaine observed that she had an experience with a chamber choir (with auditions) that was a subset of a larger choir and suggested that the LCC could consider this.
  - 5.1.3.2.5 Elaine also commented that one of the difficulties of getting summer commitments is that the summer activities arise somewhat spontaneously.
- 5.1.4 **Decision:** The board agreed to the following:
  - 5.1.4.1 The board will plan for a year with that year referring to firm plans for the fall and spring and tentative plans for the summer.
  - 5.1.4.2 The plan will be established in time for the February board meeting of the year in which the fall concert will take place.
  - 5.1.4.3 The plan will include dates, venue, and principal programming for the fall and spring concerts.
- 5.1.5 Larry made a couple of observations:
  - 5.1.5.1 The semester basis pros and cons focused more on individual needs while those for a yearly basis focused more on the needs of the ensemble.
  - 5.1.5.2 It is impossible to legislate commitment.
- 5.1.6 Lois asked whether members should be asked to enroll for the year or enroll for a semester.
  - 5.1.6.1 Steve commented that he felt that members should enroll for a semester and that he believed that by planning for the year the choir would get greater participation for both semesters.
  - 5.1.6.2 **Decision:** The board agreed that choir members should enroll on a semester basis.
- 5.1.7 Lois asked whether the choir should charge summer dues if there is a planned concert for the summer.
  - 5.1.7.1 Marlene said she felt the choir should move in this direction.
  - 5.1.7.2 Margaret agreed and also observed that the board should carefully consider summer activities and ask itself whether summer activities will ever be broadly supported by choir members.
  - 5.1.7.3 Lois asked Steve and Larry whether it was possible to plan well in advance for summer activities like the Carnegie Hall trip.
    - 5.1.7.3.1 Steve said such trips could be planned well in advance.
    - 5.1.7.3.2 Andi said she felt that traveling groups should fund themselves.
  - 5.1.7.4 **Decision:** The group agreed that dues should be charged for a "real" summer concert in the Lawrence area.

## 5.2 **Dues amount**

- 5.2.1 Matt raised the issue of whether choir member dues should be increased.
- 5.2.2 Jeanine said she preferred to leave dues at \$25 but at the same time encourage members to make a donation to the choir.
- 5.2.3 Andi commented that the board would need to make the case for financial need before raising dues.
- 5.2.4 Marlene observed that dues cover less than 25% of the budget.
- 5.2.5 Margaret suggested breaking down concert expenses on a per choir member basis as a way of explaining the expenses to members.
  - 5.2.5.1 The group felt this was a good suggestion.
- 5.2.6 Marlene suggested including a series of articles in The Scoop to raise awareness of budget issue among choir members and then reconsider the dues issue in a few months.
  - 5.2.6.1 **Decision:** Board members agreed with Marlene's suggestion.

### 5.3 Concert dates

- 5.3.1 Steve proposed that the choir strive to schedule its two primary concerts on the following dates:
  - 5.3.1.1 Winter concert – December Saturday evening after KU Vespers.
  - 5.3.1.2 Spring concert – Late April Saturday of public school music contest.
  - 5.3.1.3 **Decision:** The group agreed with Steve's proposal.

### 5.4 Donations

- 5.4.1 Jeanine suggested developing a method for asking members for a donation when they sign up for the semester.
  - 5.4.1.1 **Decision:** The group agreed donation forms should be available at the first rehearsal.
- 5.4.2 Marlene commented that choir members should not be mailed a donation letter.
- 5.4.3 Gloria has observed that corporate donors often want to see that an organization's board members donate money to the organization.
  - 5.4.3.1 Matt observed that he had spent a significant amount of money on choir expenses for which he had not sought reimbursement
  - 5.4.3.2 Lois suggested that these expenses should be reported to Jeanine, even if reimbursement is not sought.
  - 5.4.3.3 Lois also observed that some board members give time rather than money.
  - 5.4.3.4 **Decision:** The group agreed that board members should be encouraged but not required to make a donation to the choir.
- 5.4.4 Andi suggested that a person needed to be in charge of keeping track of all donations.
- 5.4.5 Lois suggested that the choir reconsider the value of sending out a mailing seeking donations to our current mailing list – she does not believe the level of donations was enough to warrant the expense of the mailing.
  - 5.4.5.1 Margaret commented that she had been on another board where each board member was asked to send a letter to ten individuals in their circle of friends/acquaintances seeking donations.
  - 5.4.5.2 Jeanine suggested trying to use the Arts Center's mailing list.
  - 5.4.5.3 Lois asked whether the board felt that a spring fund raising letter should be sent out using a different mailing list.
    - 5.4.5.3.1 Steve said no, because our spring concert is a joint one.
    - 5.4.5.3.2 Margaret agreed and suggested that the board determine the best time to do an annual mailing.
    - 5.4.5.3.3 **Decision:** The board agreed that the choir should engage in one annual fund raising mailing in late-February and that a mailing be conducted in late-February 2004.
      - 5.4.5.3.3.1 Jeanine suggested including promotion of the April concert (including ticket information) and a brochure for the next season's concerts in this mailing.
      - 5.4.5.3.3.2 Steve suggested including information on the previous year's activities as well.
      - 5.4.5.3.3.3 Lois suggested that the February 2004 mailing – to a new mailing list – should not include major promotion of the spring 2004 concert because of the joint nature of it.
- 5.4.6 **Decision:** The agreed with Lois' suggestion that corporate fund raising should be an ongoing activity.

### 5.5 Venues

- 5.5.1 Lois commented that there have been some difficulties in dealing with performances at the First United Methodist Church.
  - 5.5.1.1 Steve observed that the problems revolved around communication difficulties and that he believed the problems could be worked out in the future.
  - 5.5.1.2 Lois suggested that someone other than the president – probably the director -- should reserve the space.
  - 5.5.1.3 Lois also questioned whether First United Methodist was the best space for the choir to perform, offering her opinion that it is a physically uncomfortable performance venue for portions of the choir.

- 5.5.1.4 Steve commented that finding another venue would be difficult.
- 5.5.1.5 He also observed that it the choir would benefit from having a holiday concert on the same day and at the same place each year.
- 5.5.1.6 Margaret observed that First United Methodist was always nicely decorated and it has a great organ.
- 5.5.1.7 Decision: Board members agreed with Steve's proposal of setting up a meeting with First United Methodist representatives to discuss the communication issues.
- 5.5.2 Free State High School – The group felt this was a good venue.

## 5.6 Concert Dress

- 5.6.1 Steve suggested the possibility of tuxedos for men and uniform dress for women.
- 5.6.2 There was general consensus that the choir should move toward uniform dress.
- 5.6.3 Pros
  - 5.6.3.1 Professionalism
  - 5.6.3.2 Better audience perception
  - 5.6.3.3 Participants' perception improved – you sing better when you look good.
  - 5.6.3.4 Could encourage more commitment
  - 5.6.3.5 Men could rent
  - 5.6.3.6 Could accommodate summer concerts
  - 5.6.3.7 Some members will threaten to quit (but probably won't)
  - 5.6.3.8 One style can fit all
  - 5.6.3.9 Could have fund raiser to help pay for dress
  - 5.6.3.10 Could sell dress to new member if you are leaving the choir
- 5.6.4 Cons
  - 5.6.4.1 Cost an issue for some choir members
  - 5.6.4.2 One time members may be discouraged
  - 5.6.4.3 May lose some members
  - 5.6.4.4 Women can't rent
  - 5.6.4.5 Some women don't like skirts/dresses
- 5.6.5 Steve stated that those going on the NYC trip in June would need to have uniform dress.
- 5.6.6 **Motion and Vote:** Elaine moved that the choir adopt uniform concert dress and that those members participating in the Carnegie Hall performance be required to have the chosen attire for the NYC performance. Margaret seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.
- 5.6.7 Lois suggested that she, Margaret, and Elaine comprise a committee to select the uniform concert dress.
  - 5.6.7.1 Jeanine suggested that the dress selected be all-season, comfortable, and easy to travel with.
  - 5.6.7.2 **Action:** Lois, Margaret, and Elaine will select uniform concert dress.

## 5.7 Ticket Sales and Publicity

- 5.7.1 Steve observed that studies are showing that word of mouth is the most effective way to promote an event.
- 5.7.2 Andi stated that she would like to see an ad in the Journal World.
- 5.7.3 Jeanine said the Holiday Concert should at least have been on the Journal-World calendar of events, which it was not.
- 5.7.4 Lois commented that publicity has not been well coordinated for the past couple of concerts.
  - 5.7.4.1 She also observed that publicity is not an easy thing to do if you don't have experience with it.
- 5.7.5 Matt observed that someone needed to take charge of publicity.
  - 5.7.5.1 Lois agreed but said that no one had volunteered to do this.
  - 5.7.5.2 Lois suggested putting a "Want Ad" in The Scoop seeking assistance with publicity.
  - 5.7.5.3 Steve suggested perhaps having the vice-president chair the publicity committee.

## 5.8 By-laws

- 5.8.1 Lois suggested that there were a number of elements in the by-laws that could be simplified.
- 5.8.2 **Action:** Margaret volunteered to work on the by-laws.

## 6 January 12, 2004 Choir Registration – 7:00 p.m.

- 6.1 Old member registration: Marlene and Elaine
- 6.2 New member registration: Lois, Joan

- 6.3 Fee payment: Margaret, Jeanine
  - 6.4 Music: Andi, Jean
  - 6.5 Refreshments: Elaine will coordinate. Board members will each bring a dozen cookies.
  - 6.6 Photographs: Matt
  - 6.7 Grocery certificates: Fred, Bob
  - 6.8 T-shirts and CD's: Judy
- 7 Next meeting – Monday February 2, 2004 – 6:15 p.m. – First Baptist Church**