

**Lawrence Civic Choir  
Board/Music Committee Retreat  
Meeting Notes  
January 29, 2005**

**Present:** Lois Orth-Lopes, Jeanine Morton, Marlene Merrill, Beth Davis, Gloria Baker, Judy Veatch, Fred Johnson, Elaine McCullough, Andi Parson, Robert J. Vaughn, Dave Ice, Matt Veatch, Diana Ice, Gene Johnson

- 1 Choir Survey Results
  - 1.1 Judy distributed and summarized a survey results report.
    - 1.1.1 The tabulation illustrated a wide diversity of opinions among choir members.
  - 1.2 Lois asked the group to put together list of their own concerns about the choir.
- 2 Concerns/Issues from board/music committee
  - 2.1 Robert
    - 2.1.1 More men
    - 2.1.2 Promotion of choir
      - 2.1.2.1 LJ World
    - 2.1.3 Less foreign language except Latin
    - 2.1.4 Sectionals (with good accompanist)
    - 2.1.5 Pitch – choir loses pitch
  - 2.2 Fred
    - 2.2.1 Program too long
    - 2.2.2 Promotion
      - 2.2.2.1 Complimented Steve for encouraging choir members to promote concert themselves.
    - 2.2.3 Enjoys camaraderie
    - 2.2.4 Soloists should come from LCC
  - 2.3 Andi/Margaret
    - 2.3.1 Seating arrangements at rehearsal
      - 2.3.1.1 Get sections closer together so choir members can hear each other
      - 2.3.1.2 Final seating arrangement earlier in semester to develop continuity for concert
    - 2.3.2 Venue
      - 2.3.2.1 FUMC creates arrangement problems
  - 2.4 Elaine
    - 2.4.1 Sectionals
    - 2.4.2 Seating order
    - 2.4.3 Choir trips
    - 2.4.4 Promotion - Community visibility
    - 2.4.5 Ticket cost
  - 2.5 Gene
    - 2.5.1 Trips
      - 2.5.1.1 Tour of Kansas
    - 2.5.2 Concert attire – Cost, rental options
    - 2.5.3 Foreign language coaching
    - 2.5.4 Mission statement too broad – Refine it

- 2.6 Diana
  - 2.6.1 Trips – exclusivity of the them
  - 2.6.2 Venue
  - 2.6.3 Attendance – Enforce and reiterate attendance policies
  - 2.6.4 Improving technique – Need to know the notes before we can work on finer points
  - 2.6.5 Seating chart
- 2.7 Dave Ice
  - 2.7.1 Type of music – repertoire
  - 2.7.2 Performance venue
  - 2.7.3 Trips
  - 2.7.4 Inclusiveness for new members – orientation for new members
- 2.8 Gloria
  - 2.8.1 Purchasing music
- 2.9 Jeanine
  - 2.9.1 System to protect choir financially
  - 2.9.2 Tuxes/dresses policy
  - 2.9.3 Endowment policies
- 2.10 Marlene
  - 2.10.1 Performance quality
  - 2.10.2 Friendliness of choir
  - 2.10.3 Plan for new members
    - 2.10.3.1 Affordability of attire and dues
  - 2.10.4 Clarify goals for the choir as a whole and for specific concerts
  - 2.10.5 Concerts should focus on the choir than on soloists
- 2.11 Beth
  - 2.11.1 Warm-ups to teach pitch
- 2.12 Judy
  - 2.12.1 Concert schedule
- 2.13 Matt
  - 2.13.1 More frequent encore performances
- 2.14 Lois
  - 2.14.1 Bylaws and other policies
- 3 White board numbered list of issues and voting results – Each group was asked to select their top five issues from the list of issues detailed on the white board. The number of votes is reflected to the right of each issue.
  - 3.1.1 More men - 5
  - 3.1.2 Promotion/visibility/ticket price - 6
  - 3.1.3 Less foreign language/ coaching - 0
  - 3.1.4 Sectionals/lean music sooner - 3
  - 3.1.5 Pitch/warm-ups - 3
  - 3.1.6 Length of program - 0
  - 3.1.7 Camaraderie - 0
  - 3.1.8 Seating at rehearsals match concert formation - 8
  - 3.1.9 Performance venue (FUMC) - 4
  - 3.1.10 Choir trips – Tour of Kansas - 9
  - 3.1.11 Concert attire – financial affect on choir/affordability - 4

- 3.1.12 Mission statement/goal for concert - 4
- 3.1.13 Repertoire/choir vs. soloists - 0
- 3.1.14 Attendance rules - 1
- 3.1.15 Technique - 8
- 3.1.16 New member orientation - 7
- 3.1.17 Buying music – 4
- 3.1.18 Concert schedule/encore - 4
- 3.1.19 Upgrade bylaws (endowment, gifts, attire) - 8
- 3.1.20 Soloists should be LCC members - 1
- 4 Top five concerns/issues
  - 4.1 **Technique** (Encompasses issues 15, 1, 5, 4, 3, 8)
    - 4.1.1 Rehearsal seating arrangement
      - 4.1.1.1 Stage manager to rearrange chairs
        - 4.1.1.1.1 **Action:** Steve will experiment with alternate arrangements at upcoming rehearsals without a wholesale rearrangement of the chairs.
      - 4.1.1.2 Seating chart
        - 4.1.1.2.1 Perhaps one that also facilitates taking attendance
        - 4.1.1.2.2 Sitting in the round -- Perhaps in multi-purpose room
        - 4.1.1.2.3 **Action:** Steve and Beth will develop a seating chart the first Monday in February.
        - 4.1.1.2.4 **Action:** Matt and Judy will bring an extra set of nametags that evening to facilitate seating chart creation.
    - 4.1.2 Rehearsal CD's for each section
      - 4.1.2.1 **Action:** The choir will attempt to contract with Geoff to create rehearsal CD's – Steve will talk to Geoff about this.
      - 4.1.2.2 **Action:** Steve will find will a language coach and include foreign language pronunciation tips on the CD.
    - 4.1.3 Sectionals
      - 4.1.3.1 Diana advocated for sectionals
      - 4.1.3.2 Robert and Elaine observed that sectionals have the potential to be a waste of time if the section leader is not effective.
      - 4.1.3.3 **Action:** Add issue to board agenda. Need to discuss whether sectionals really are needed and, if so, what to do about lack of multiple pianos at First Baptist.
    - 4.1.4 Pitch
      - 4.1.4.1 **Action:** Steve will work harder on this during rehearsals.
    - 4.1.5 Attendance manager to enforce policies
      - 4.1.5.1 Beth suggested having members pick up a pre-printed nametag at beginning of rehearsal and if don't pick it up then attendance monitor sends a card/email to the absent person.
      - 4.1.5.2 **Action:** Matt and Judy will produce mailing labels to act as a nametag and an attendance-monitoring device.
    - 4.1.6 Warm-ups
      - 4.1.6.1 Steve suggested that members be encouraged to do some warm-up before rehearsal.
    - 4.1.7 Entrances and cutoffs concerns

- 4.1.7.1 Jeanine suggested that Steve push the choir more on this
- 4.1.8 Learning the music
  - 4.1.8.1 Teaser performance to force members to learn music earlier
  - 4.1.8.2 Run-throughs at various points
  - 4.1.8.3 Record rehearsals
    - 4.1.8.3.1 **Action:** Steve will record rehearsal at some point during the semester.
    - 4.1.8.3.2 **Action:** Steve also will play portions of the Holiday Concert CD to illustrate technique issues.
  - 4.1.8.4 Specific homework assignments
    - 4.1.8.4.1 **Action:** Steve will make an effort to identify portions of pieces with which the choir struggles during rehearsal and ask members to work on those sections for the next rehearsal.
  - 4.1.8.5 Guidance on standard notations for marking up music
    - 4.1.8.5.1 Workshop on basics of counting
      - 4.1.8.5.1.1 Diana offered to do a basic workshop a couple of times during the semester at 7:00 p.m. before rehearsal.
      - 4.1.8.5.1.2 **Action:** Lois will put this issue on the board meeting agenda.
  - 4.1.8.6 Robert suggested that choir members without access to a keyboard should be encouraged to practice the words.
- 4.1.9 Saturday rehearsal before the week of the concert
- 4.2 **Trips** (Issue 10)
  - 4.2.1 Wales trip update
    - 4.2.1.1 Marlene reported that she, Gloria, and Dave met with the travel agency selected to organize the trip.
    - 4.2.1.2 Next steps
      - 4.2.1.2.1 **Action:** Subcommittee presents trip plan to the board at the March board meeting and the board will decide whether to present the plan to the choir.
      - 4.2.1.2.2 If yes, then present trip plan to the choir in March.
      - 4.2.1.2.3 Then have the travel agent present information to the choir on April 18, 2005.
  - 4.2.1.3 Primary evaluation criteria for whether we go:
    - 4.2.1.3.1 A balanced ensemble of singers
- 4.3 **Upgrade bylaws** (Encompasses issues 19 & 12)
  - 4.3.1 Margaret suggested including in the bylaws language that requires the board to develop policies for various issues and then have the board develop these policies as separate documents.
  - 4.3.2 **Action:** Bylaws subcommittee – Lois, Margaret, Jeanine, Marlene – meeting on February 14, 2005, 6:30 p.m.
- 4.4 **New member orientation** (Encompasses issues 16, 14, 11, 7)
  - 4.4.1 Steve suggested creating a pamphlet/booklet to provide orientation information including
    - 4.4.1.1 Vowel guides
    - 4.4.1.2 Rehearsal advice

- 4.4.1.3 Posture
  - 4.4.1.4 Pencils
  - 4.4.1.5 Vocal health
  - 4.4.1.6 Expectations
    - 4.4.1.6.1 Rehearse on your own
  - 4.4.1.7 Attendance
  - 4.4.1.8 Attire
    - 4.4.1.8.1 **Action:** A subcommittee to investigate the details of the concert attire issue – Lois, Margaret, Andi, Jeanine, Beth – will meet at 6:30 p.m. on Monday, January 31, 2005.
  - 4.4.1.9 Section leaders/phone #
  - 4.4.1.10 How to get help
  - 4.4.1.11 Web site
  - 4.4.1.12 Workshops on reading music
  - 4.4.1.13 Scholarships for dues and attire
  - 4.4.1.14 **Action:** Subcommittee on pamphlet/booklet – Steve, Dave, Matt, Judy -- will meet at 6:30 p.m. on Monday, January 31, 2005.
- 4.4.2 Making new members feel welcome
- 4.4.2.1 Elaine emphasized trying to make new members feel welcome through personal contact.
  - 4.4.2.2 Diane agreed and observed that we needed to create a culture of friendliness.
- 4.5 **Choir promotion and venue** (Encompasses issues 2 & 9)
- 4.5.1 Venue
- 4.5.1.1 Rehearsal venue
    - 4.5.1.1.1 Steve observed that John Paul Johnson had suggested that the choir consider coming back to FUMC for rehearsals.
    - 4.5.1.1.2 Lois expressed skepticism about moving rehearsals back to FUMC.
  - 4.5.1.2 Performance venue
    - 4.5.1.2.1 Steve pointed out that a committee took a look at numerous venues a couple of years ago and recommended FUMC and Free State.
    - 4.5.1.2.2 Diana observed that Free State was not an ideal venue acoustically or from the standpoint of having empty seats.
    - 4.5.1.2.3 Lois commented that FUMC caused arrangement problems for many choir members.
    - 4.5.1.2.4 Lois also observed that FUMC always reserves the right to bump the choir from the church if a church event comes up.
    - 4.5.1.2.5 In spite of the fact that neither performance venue is ideal, group members agreed that the choir should continue to perform at FUMC and Free State due to the lack of better options.
- 4.5.2 Promotion
- 4.5.2.1 Lois observed that it was difficult to promote one more event in December with our Holiday Concert.
    - 4.5.2.1.1 After some discussion of moving the concert to November, the group expressed a consensus to keep the fall concert in December.
  - 4.5.2.2 Beth suggested getting LCC information included in KU orientation literature.
    - 4.5.2.2.1 **Action:** Beth will check on this.

4.5.2.3 Steve suggested signage near First Baptist advertising rehearsals at the beginning of the semester.

4.5.2.4 Need to use the LAC contact

4.5.2.5 Consider outsourcing publicity activities in the absence of an active publicity committee.

4.5.2.5.1 **Action:** Subcommittee to develop job description for a paid PR person -- Marlene, Judy, Dave, Elaine – will meet at 6:00 p.m. on Monday, February 21, 2005.

4.5.2.6 Cards/flyers to promote the choir.

## 5 Upcoming meetings

5.1 **Action:** Lois will contact Sandy about meeting rooms for the meetings.

5.2 January 31, 2005

5.2.1 Attire subcommittee (6:30 p.m.)

5.2.2 Handbook/pamphlet subcommittee (6:30 p.m.)

5.3 February 7, 2005 – Board meeting (6:15 p.m.)

5.4 February 14, 2005

5.4.1 Music Committee

5.4.2 Bylaws Committee (6:30 p.m.)

5.5 February 21, 2005

5.5.1 Public relations subcommittee (6:00 p.m.)