**Pemigewasset Choral Society Board Minutes, Feb. 26, 2022**

**Board Retreat**

**In attendance:** Robbin Adams, Sarah Bunkley, Sue Chadwick, Deborah Corr, Will Gunn, Dan Hale, Marilyn Pomerantz, Anita Ross, Susan Scrimshaw, Allan Stern

**Not Attending:** Mary Hazelton, Logan Ross, Eileen Curran-Kondrad

**Approval of meeting minutes from January 31, 2021**

Approved unanimously, with changes suggested by Deb Corr.

**Director Report**

**Programming:**

December 2022- Ave Maria (and seasonal selections)

May 2023- For a Breath of Ecstasy- Michael John Trotta (string quartet, oboe)

December 2023- Lux (and other seasonal selections)

May 2024- 50th Anniversary Concert with new commission\* and Haydn’s Lord Nelson Mass (orchestra and soloists) Colonial Theater?! Guest Conductors (Leslie McDonnell and Bob Swift)?

Commission might be $1000 per minute for a commissioned piece.

Salisbury Singers also celebrating 50th anniversary; maybe go in with them.

* + - What can we afford? ($1K per minute- negotiable)
    - Who do we want to ask? (representation)
      * Names to Consider
        + Moira Smiley (https://moirasmiley.com/)
        + Mason Bynes (<https://www.masonbynes.org/>)
        + Marques Garrett (https://www.mlagmusic.com/)
    - What text are we looking for? What can represent 50 years of Pemi?
      * Discussion: It would be nice to mention the Abenaki/other Native American groups who lived in NH
    - Possible Collaboration with Salisbury Singers (MA)

**NEED TO PUT TOGETHER A PLANNING TASK FORCE FOR 50th Anniversary Year - Kathy Hillier already volunteered. Will will ask her about chairing, and a timeline for the committee (get off the ground next year).**

Dan Perkins will be taking a choir to Portugal June 2023 and will be looking for singers. Could be continuing our mission; if there are enough Pemi singers, we could have our own spot in the concert. Manchester Choral society already learning the pieces. Need a commitment by Nov. 15th. Board can endorse it. $3100 without airfare is the price.

PSU Contract – Need for next fall, so no immediate hurry

Other choruses pay for rehearsal space: Salisbury $25/ wk; Concord Chorale $100/wk

Stewart Crowell, Director of Silver Center;

Pemi Choral Space needs at Silver Center:

11 rehearsals at $200, $1800 concert venue; 1500 for dress rehearsal, 1500 for the concert

**Sarah Bunkley will talk with Stewart Crowell re cost of Monday rehearsals and report back to the board without 16 days.**

**From Contract:**

$7000 for space; $1425 for instruments, pianos, tuning, tympani = 8,425

Contract for this spring was signed two weeks ago

For fall term, sign contract by August? (negotiations must take place sooner)

**Will: Concert Cycles**

Winter is usually set; spring is more problematic in terms of planning; two concerts or three? Will suggests moving to two concerts; maybe add a third (outdoor) “Pops” concert that doesn’t take that many rehearsals; this suggestion was met with enthusiasm.

Will: Thinking about the next ten years: what do we like about our programming, what do we want to do better?

Sue: Think big picture, where do we want to be in ten years?

Sarah: Shifts in last ten years; musically we have “upped our game”; doing fewer “old chestnuts” and shorter easier pieces. Gone from average of 110 singers to 70-80. Some of this is due to COVID. New people are outstanding musicians. Are we missing new non-skilled musicians? Sarah knows people who didn’t come back because they found the music “too intimidating.” “How do we include the non-singer who loves singing in high school or church choir, but not professionally or higher end amateur.”

Discussion: This may be anecdotal, we should take a survey of the membership. It was noted that our bylaws state that singers should be able to sing on pitch and blend with others. Reading music is not required, nor are auditions. It was also noted that there is a “sweet spot” between those who can’t maintain pitch, blend, or find some of the music too difficult and requirements for an audition chorus, which we are not.

It was noted there are ways of supporting people who don’t read music. It was also noted that

many chorus members choose to stay with us because we have an excellent professional director

and most of the music for each concert is challenging enough to be worthwhile and enjoyable to learn. Several people expressed appreciation for the current level of music we are performing.

There was a discussion on understanding the population that we serve? “We are a community chorus; we have to define what community means.” It was noted that our community is very diverse economically and professionally as we now include a major university, retirement communities, and many health care settings in addition to traditional blue-collar groups. The NH Music Festival attracts many people who don’t even know we exist -- how do we change that?

There was enthusiasm for Will’s suggestion that we do two concerts in spring, pops concert in summer, including sing-alongs, that might bring in the people Sarah is talking about.

**Will volunteers to lead a “Pops” concert for this June!**

Dan: Suggestion: Do a pops concert at Alex Ray’s barn on Route 3.

In response to earlier suggestions from Will and Sue regarding: What are our goals? How do we define ourselves? **Sarah volunteers to devise a survey with Will to send out to current singers and friends – she will send a draft version to the whole board for comment before finalizing the survey.**

**Will:**

Ticket Prices for Hanaway Theater: $15 Row N, $10 Adult, $8 Senior, Free PSU student (and high school)

Split Revenue from Concerts: We are giving PSU $500, the rest comes to us.

Need to have ticket info on poster, so decide today! “Tickets available online or at the door”; could put QR code there as well; WE WILL be charging for tickets at the spring concerts.

**Still to be decided:** Should we have a donation basket as well (we do have those nice banners!)

**Acting President – Marilyn**

Laura Belanger’s Contract – Need to change amount from $4,000 to $6,000; fixing a clerical error; Laura, Marilyn need to initial it.

**Those zooming in to rehearsals:** How many in-person rehearsals should they be required to attend?

Will would prefer three in-person rehearsals plus the dress rehearsal; Marilyn will publicize this.

**Treasurer- Deb Corr**

Deb went over Preliminary Budget Worksheet for Fiscal 2022/2023). **She projects a shortfall of $8,510.40** which will have to come out of our savings (concert revenue way down). This is still preliminary. For example, we will print fewer programs than originally budgeted.

Deb wants a March date for **Budget Committee – the meeting will be Thursday March 17th at 4 pm at the high school**

**Publicity – Anita and Susan**

**How many posters to order for the spring concerts?**

We will order 75 posters, 2,500 Bookmarks, 450 programs for the two concerts.

**Time Line for Concert Program (from Susan):** See Addendum #3 below

Extend deadline from March 2 to March 7th for all contributions

**Sue Chadwick – Communications**

* Suggest: Update bylaws to rename “Publicity” as “Communication” and create a separate position to be responsible for program materials production.
  + **See the bylaws discussion below for an action item based on this suggestion.**
* Plan 2-3 postings per week – utilize social media and website to increase awareness and community engagement.
* Do as much as we can to promote camaraderie; use Constant Contact as an email platform, to reach out to our former members and our current members.
* She agrees with Sarah Bunkley; that we should expand to wider community;

Marilyn noted that her lists of singers include: current singers, friends to date (non-singer contributors), former singers. She also has a Google list which consists of: 250, which includes those “retired” from Pemi

**Fundraising – Susan**

Task list sent to the Board is for a procedures manual to help guide future fundraising efforts.

**Advertising is a full-focus job**; getting ads for concert program; should be somebody else besides fundraising chair;

**Fundraising really has three jobs:** Solicitation and acknowledgement (donor management), getting ads for concert programs, selling products (fudge, honey). These do not need to be three separate Board positions, but could be coordinated by the Fundraising Chair.

**Other Discussion Items**

**Bylaws**

Responsibilities of each board position

It was agreed that the detailed descriptions of Board responsibilities and work Board members have been sending in for their areas form the basis for a Procedures Manual. Work on compiling this can take place over the next several months.

**Wardrobe**: Suggestion: eliminate wardrobe as a board position

We have moved from complex wardrobe requirements to more simple all black, or minor variations suggested by the Director. **There was consensus that this position no longer involves enough work to make it a full board position and duties could be assigned to someone in an at-large position.**

**Publicity and Communications**: The changes in how publicity and communications work in our society since the founding of the chorus were noted. **It was decided to separate communications from the oversight and production of program/poster/bookmark materials with appropriate names for the Board posts and descriptions.**  Since Wardrobe would be removed as a category, we would still have the same number of Board positions.

**New position Title:** “Communication”

The current “publicity” tasks, as carried out, could be better defined as “concert planning and management” – Bylaws committee to address this

**Sarah Bunkley suggested that she, Sue Chadwick and Susan Scrimshaw work on these and other needed bylaws changes and submit their suggestions to the full Board. The suggestion was accepted by all.**

**It was agreed that we don’t have to wait for formal bylaws change processes to be complete to shift the Board responsibilities for the coming year. The Acting President can make ad hoc changes to duties pending formal changes.**

**Past President – length of term**

**After discussion, it was agreed that the Past President should serve two years**. If the Past President wants to retire from the Board, the bylaws provide for electing an additional at-large member into that slot. **The bylaws committee will look at the two-year term.**

It was decided to skip the Fudge Fundraiser for Mother’s Day this year.

**Elections/Transfer of Power**

**It was decided to continue with two-year terms on the odd/even schedules as noted on the Board list attached (and in the Bylaws) and not to have term limits.**

It was also noted that the Nominating committee should assess board member involvement and the need for board renewal and turnover in deciding whether or not to renew terms.

**Bylaws** is officially one word, not by-laws (Bylaws committee, take note)

Non-singers can be on the board;

The nominating committee should deal with people who know they’ll be away for a full term, without Zoom, email or phone involvement. Should they be on the board at all?

Nominating Committee: in a discussion of possible board members, several names were mentioned

**Recruiting and keeping singers; (Allan)**

Retention is really important, just as important as recruitment. You need to develop intentional, systematic actions to build up community. For example:

* **Choir buddies** for new members - Sarah Bunkley agrees to set this up (she will ask who is willing to be a choir buddy, then will make the assignments)
* **Name tags** - Allan agrees to make name tags for those who need them: There will be a sign-up list available at choir rehearsal.
* **Activities to have people get to know each other better,** especially at beginning of each term. First two rehearsals, adjourn ten minutes early, have some “get-to-know-you” activities.
* **Building community among Zoom users**: Will agrees to not cut off Zoom quite so early at the end of rehearsal so that Zoom users can chat among themselves.

Error on Calendar: March 7th Monday, we’re at the high school, NOT March 14th!

Sarah B will make an announcement about Will’s high school trip to Gettysburg, to help support it.

**ADDENDUM #1 – SUE CHADWICK**

**Pemi Board Retreat, February 26, 2022**

**Sue Chadwick**

I am hopeful that the board retreat will be able to use the extended time to engage in constructive, “30,000-foot-level” discussions about the future of the chorus, how we see its community engagement, membership growth, and its goal of continuing to make music that reflects its status as a community chorus, accessible to a diverse membership of the surrounding communities. I look forward to a discussion of Will’s topics of how we see ourselves in 5-10 years. What are the Pemi’s goals—audience/members/community engagement???

A more accurate look at all the tasks currently being performed by board members, many not related to their assigned titles, hopefully will inform a revised By-laws to more accurately describe board positions, and to enable an energized Nominating Committee to be mindful of the skill sets the Board needs to have among its members.

In that regard, I offer a listing of what my current duties have been as a board member, and what my vision is for a revised By-laws definition of tasks that will expand on the current “publicity” role, and define a more strategic marketing role that includes Social Media planning, community engagement and creating engaging content for the program, newspaper stories, social postings, etc.

**Current duties:**

* Coordinate content with the webmaster that enables easy linkage from Facebook to the website for public dissemination of relevant membership and concert information
* Produce Facebook posts throughout a semester:
  + - focus on member recruitment in the weeks preceding and 3 weeks into semester
    - Some rehearsal posts mid-semester to maintain engagement
    - Focus on concert promotion in the last month of semester
* Interview Will for concert background—receive his program notes in advance
* Compile a media list with due dates, contacts and submission details for all area print and web media relevant to concert venue locations
* Write Articles for monthly papers (e,g, Newfound Lake Life)
* Create press releases for distribution to local media, and local faith communities to publish
* Interview interesting members and write short blurbs or quotes inclusion in the program content
* Take photos for use in Social Media postings and/or share with webmaster
* Use Constant Contact email platform for communication with members and donors for concert promotion and other information (as allowed by Board).

**Proposal: Sue Chadwick**

It is my hope that the current By-laws can be updated to expand its list of board positions to acknowledge that communications, marketing, social media marketing, and community engagement are more relevant than the outdated term, “publicity.” **A new position title might be “Communication,” and the current “Publicity” tasks, as carried out, could be better defined as concert program production, printing and distribution.**

**Best practices in communication and marketing for non-profits make strategic use of Social Media and website content on an ongoing basis to increase awareness and community engagement.** **For instance, I propose *creating and using a pre-planned calendar of postings and website links that are semester long*, and continue up to and after the concert, with 2-3 posts per week.**

The following is just a brainstorming of creative ideas.

**Posts are varied and *might* include:** intro and description of oldest/youngest members of the chorus; teasing posts about bios of different members of the chorus (Bio #1, #2, etc).; Who is in our upcoming chamber orchestra? Brief spotlight; Where do members come from? Closest/farthest; Dress rehearsal photo; tidbits about the concert music; Special events—a recruitment night?

**Best practices in communication also engage members (current and former) to create and/or enhance the camaraderie of community.** The past few years have not included either the potluck in Rumney nor the after-concert dinner (Covid), so it is important that we as a chorus do as much as we can to promote camaraderie through a variety of ways—in person events and written communication, using the Constant Contact email platform.

* We are a large group with many very interesting members that could be profiled on a quarterly basis
* We can bring interesting topics re: choral music, and/or music in the schools to the attention of our members via web links
* Either our first rehearsal of a semester or another one could include a social get-together with food
* Not every member of the larger community wants to join as a singer—lets create a newsletter opportunity for people who just want to keep up with what we are doing. A join our newsletter link from Social Media to the website can help us generate a list. (There are very easy and acceptable opt-in/opt-out provisions on an email that can be placed at the TOP of any correspondence—and we would start out by using our expanded former members/current members list).
* Survey the membership on a yearly basis for a variety of topics TBD by the Board.

Respectfully Submitted,

Susan Chadwick,

Pemigewasset Choral Society

Member-at-large

**ADDENDUM #2:**

**Vice-President Position – Marilyn Pomerantz**

**Duties of Vice President (from By-Laws)**

1. Shall assume the President’s duties should the President be absent or otherwise incapacitated
2. Shall assist the President, as may be requested, in the performance of the President’s duties
3. Shall be responsible for maintaining the official attendance and the seniority lists, for their posting at rehearsals, and for supplying copies to the Music Director, President, Treasurer and others who have official need
4. Shall keep records of names, addresses and telephone numbers of all active members
5. Shall keep records of inactive and potential members

ADD to d) “email addresses”

**As of today, Master List includes the following data sheets**

*Spring 2022 (active-Current Semester)*: Count by part, last name, first name, part, folder#, notes (new, section leader etc), address, city, state, zip, concert city, cell phone, home phone, business phone, email 1, email 2

*Fall 2021 (active-Past Semester)*: same as above. I use this as basis of Current Semester

*3 more Lists (inactive- historical only)* going back 3 semesters (total 2 years from current date – spring 2020, fall 2019, spring 2019)

*Friends to Date:*

Prior Singers (currently 140): Last name, first name, part, notes, address, city, state, zip, cell or home phone, business phone, email 1, email 2 (this list includes names of deceased with address deleted)

Non Singer Contributors (currently 20): Last name, first name, address, city, state, zip

**From Master List**

Before 1st rehearsal:

Copy *Current Semester* and rename

Print signup sheets for *Current Semester* singers plus blanks for new singers (forms created for mail merge)

After 1st rehearsal  
Enter folder number for each singer (coordinate with Librarian)

Enter info on new singers

Enter changes for current singers

After week 3:

Keep count of numbers by section and report to board

Create attendance lists for section leaders

Get attendance lists from section leaders on a regular basis

Print section lists with name and concert city for inclusion in program for singers to approve

If singer has not joined for 4 semesters (2 years), delete from *Current Semester* and move information to *Friends to Date*

**Mailing List: 205 contacts** 50 S, 50 A, 18 B, 18 T, 65 Retired, 14 Board, 2 Staff

[**pemichoralsociety@gmail.com**](mailto:pemichoralsociety@gmail.com)Sing4Us!

Maintain list of current and past singers

Add new singers

First Name, Last Name, Section (company), email address, label

Enter changes for current singers

Send messages to singers as appropriate

Read and respond to emails from singers and outsiders

**Requirements for Vice President**

Competency in using spreadsheets (Excel) and mail merge

Knowledge of Google email

Attention to detail

A good printer

A great deal of patience

**ADDENDUM #3**

**Timetable for Pemi Choral Society Marketing, Fundraising, Publicity   
and Concert Program – Spring 2022**Susan Scrimshaw, Anita Ross, Sue Chadwick, Allan Stern  
February 20, 2022

**January**: Deb Corr provides final data on donors for 2021. Susan Scrimshaw and Allan Stern generate donor thank you/IRS letters and mail-merge file for printer. Susan writes notes on letters and Allan and Susan mail letters.

**Week of February 1**: Susan contacts Lisa Lundari re program cover art/poster. Will Gunn and Harmony Markey (PSU) are also part of communications with Lisa re the vision for the program.

**By Wednesday February 23:** Will provides Peter Adams and Lisa Lundari with the wording for the program cover and poster, with copies to Anita Ross and Susan Scrimshaw.

**By Friday Feb 25**: Will provides the program for the concert to Peter Adams and board members heading marketing (Anita) and fundraising (Susan).

**During February:** Anita Ross, Sue Chadwick and Susan Scrimshaw meet/correspond with Peter Adams to discuss the program – appearance and content

**By Mon February 28:** Lisa Lundari provides draft of poster/program cover to marketing/fundraising committee members, and Will, Harmony and Marilyn

**NOTE**: We will go with a smaller poster for spring, ½ the size of the fall poster

**By Friday March 4:** Publicity and fundraising committee members, along with Will, Harmony and Marilyn, provide feedback on program cover/poster to Lisa

**By Wed March 9:** Lisa sends revised poster and bookmark proof to Susan, Anita, Will, Harmony and Marilyn

**By Friday March 11:** Anita and Susan send poster and bookmarks to the printer (Minuteman Press)

**Note: We want to pick up posters and bookmarks in time for distribution Monday, March 21**

**By Monday March 7:** All concert program content to Peter

* + Letter from the Acting President-Marilyn
  + Any final updates on concert program-Will
  + List of orchestra members by instrument (Will) and sponsors (Susan)
  + Notes from the Director (Both Will and Harmony?)
  + Donor information from Fundraising Committee
  + Lists of members of all three choruses from Marilyn and Harmony
  + Other program content such as vignettes, interviews

**By Friday March 18:** Peter Adams sends first draft of program for proofing and editing

Edits to Peter by Wednesday, March 23

**By Mon March 28:** Peter sends final draft of program to for one last review

Final edits to Peter by Thursday, March 31

**By Friday April 1:** Peter sends program to printer (2 weeks before printed programs due to Anita)

**By Thursday April 14:** Printer delivers programs to Anita (one week before concert); Anita to check programs on receipt!

**NOTE:** *Number needed for spring to be determined at 2/26/22 Board retreat*

We will have a recycle box at the first concert to collect programs

**Concert Dates: April 21 and 22**

**Publicity/Communications Timetable for Anita Ross and Sue Chadwick**

**Monday March 21:** Deadline to submit press release to local papers

**Monday March 21** Deadline to send press release to local churches and choruses

**Thurs April 7:** Follow up (2 weeks before concert) to ensure receipt of press releases

**Fri April 8:** Email message re concerts for singers to send to friends (remind singers at Monday rehearsal April 11). Coordinate mailing with Marilyn who maintains the master list.

**Fri April 15:** Email message re concerts to non-singers on our mailing list; Coordinate with Marilyn

**ADDENDUM #4**

**Allan Stern** - **Task List**

**Serves on Nominating Committee**

**Maintains website** - note:  not a board position (but somebody’s gotta do it)

* Updates at beginning of each term- Join Us page, Members page, rehearsal schedule, concert info, music info (from director) – coordinates with Communication person
* Before each concert; update Upcoming Events page (coordinates with Communication person)
* After concert:  Add concert poster to Previous Concerts page
* After concert:  edits photos from contributing photographers first; adds gallery of photos to Photos page
* Adds board minutes to Board of Directors page once they have been approved
* Add Updates to “In Memoriam” page as needed
* Add donor photos with instrumentalists to Support page
* Other:
* **Non website:**
* Updates board directory (Word doc) - should this be in secretary’s list of tasks?

**FUNDRAISING TEAM TASKS**

**General Fundraising Appeal letters - Fall term**

— Sets up Mail Merge from appropriate Excel lists from vice-president

— Get letters and envelopes printed up (Minuteman)

— make sure Excel data are in mail mergeable format

— stuff envelopes, put stamps on, seal envelopes, take to post office

**Concert Program - winter, spring concerts`**

Take Donation Record spreadsheet (from treasurer) and convert sorted donations list into Donor Categories List; make sure names are correct, with “in Honor/Memory of” names correctly listed; alphabetize by last name within each category (amounts not shown in program)

Proofread program as needed

**Tax Donation Letters - January**

Take Donation Record spreadsheet data from treasurer for the previous fiscal year, create Mail Merge Document for each donor.  Get documents and envelopes printed out (Minuteman); stuff envelopes (once individual acknowledgement notes are written), put stamps on, seal envelopes, take to post office

**ADDENDUM #5**

**Director’s Report- Strategic Plan 2022**

**Will Gunn**

**Programming:**

**December 2022- Ave Maria (and seasonal selections)**

**May 2023- For a Breath of Ecstasy- Michael John Trotta (string quartet, oboe)**

**December 2023- Lux (and other seasonal selections)**

**May 2024- 50th Anniversary Concert with new commission\* and Haydn’s Lord Nelson Mass (orchestra and soloists) Colonial Theater?! Guest Conductors (Leslie and Bob)?**

Discussion:

* 50th Anniversary Commission
  + Committee? Questions to consider:
    - What can we afford? ($1K per minute- negotiable)
    - Who do we want to ask? (representation)
      * Names to Consider
        + Moira Smiley (https://moirasmiley.com/)
        + Mason Bynes (<https://www.masonbynes.org/>)
        + Marques Garrett (https://www.mlagmusic.com/)
    - What text are we looking for? What can represent 50 years of Pemi?
    - Possible Collaboration with Salisbury Singers (MA)
* Travel Opportunity 2023
  + Dan Perkins- MidAmerica Productions in Portugal
* Concert Cycles
  + Harder to schedule PSU in May
  + Summer Series?
  + 2 vs. 3 concerts in the spring series
  + Survey Membership?
* PSU Rental Agreement
  + What is a reasonable price for a rehearsal space?
    - Salisbury Singers (MA)- $25/week
    - Acton Community Chorus (MA)- $250/year
    - Concord Chorale (NH)- $100/week at CCMS
  + PRHS is an option
* What are we looking for in the next 10 years?
  + What excites us about the next 10 years in Pemi?
  + What concerns us about the next 10 years?