

Siskiyou Singers Board Minutes

May 18, 2024 9:00 am

Mary Bergstrom's – Ashland

Board Members Present: Mark Reppert, Steve Thomas, Howie Seay (ZOOM), Mary Van Wesep, Laura Barlow, Mary Bergstrom, Michele Kyle, Andrew Klein (ZOOM), Inga Leed (ZOOM)

Absent: Scott Nelson, Loretta Barker

Meeting Called to Order at 9:16AM

Approval of April 2024 Minutes

MOTION: Michele Kyle moved that the April 2024 Board Minutes be approved with noted corrections. Motion seconded by Laura Barlow. MOTION PASSED

WRITTEN REPORTS

Director – Mark Reppert – no report

President – Steve Thomas

Looking back on our last two terms for the 2023-2024 season, I feel quite pleased with our collective accomplishments. Of course, there are so many people who contribute to Siskiyou Singers success that I would like to thank; however, I won't list them here. We all know who they are at this point. You've probably noticed that I try to send out lots of thank yous in my weekly emails as appropriate as well as numerous personal emails that I respond to as President. I believe that we are all excited to see what awesomeness we will create for our special December 2024 and January 2025 concert programs! It's all quite a new experience and challenge for us and will require some earlier than usual discussions and planning on our part. Of course, Shawn Schaffer is right on top of it. He called me a few weeks ago to discuss his ideas and proposals for his participation in both events and how best to promote them. He even included thoughts on raising funds for the "free" concert this December. I've added those to New Business on our agenda today for beginning the board's discussions and planning now. I'm looking forward to our 2024-2025 season and serving my second year as President of Siskiyou Singers!

Publicity – Michael Zuzel – no report

Membership – Howie Seay

Recent Events

- **The Definition of Beauty Concert:** Our spring concert was a resounding success! We had 53 members performing across two nights (May 4-5) at the SOU Recital Hall. Many thanks to all who participated.
- **After-Concert Party:** A huge thank you to everyone who attended the after-concert party at Ro Tutland's house! The abundance of food, drinks, and good company made it a wonderful celebration. We had 37 members attend (plus the host and guests), with at least 16 bottles of wine, 10 main dishes, 9 sides/appetizers, 6 desserts, 3 bread and butter, and a variety of other treats. Many thanks also to those who helped with set-up and clean-up.

Proposed Changes to Upcoming Season Registration

To streamline registration and reduce paperwork, I am proposing the following options for the upcoming season:

1. **Online Pre-Registration (Optional):** Members may choose to pre-register online using our standard registration form. This would simplify the process for those who prefer to do so.
2. **Online Payment Options:** For those who pre-register online, there would be an option to pay membership fees in advance through our existing PayPal system. However, please note that using PayPal incurs a small fee for the organization, similar to credit card payments made in-person with our Zettle reader.

3. **Deadlines:** If implemented, online pre-registration and payment would close 48 hours before the first rehearsal. A list of pre-registered and paid members would be generated for the registration team's reference.

Important Note: In-person registration at the first rehearsal would still be the primary and preferred method. This proposal aims to offer additional convenience for those who wish to take advantage of it.

Choir Tour – Cynthia Tank – no report

Communications and Connections – Michele Kyle – no report

ADDITIONAL: Steve asked Ann Beaufort to join the Communications/Connections Task Force. She said YES!

Technology Task Force – Andrew Klein

Memorandum: Howie Seay

Subject: Update on Email System Transition to Google Workspace

I am writing to provide an update on our recent attempt to transition our email system to Google Workspace for Nonprofits. As you may recall, this change was intended to give us access to a suite of productivity tools from Google and potentially streamline our communication infrastructure.

While we have successfully verified our domain (siskiyousingers.org) with Google Workspace and gained access to their services, we've decided to temporarily postpone the full email migration. During testing, Michael and Mary discovered a critical issue, which was caused by the email routing configuration, which resulted in some important emails from our e-commerce platform (Ecwid) not being delivered. These emails contain crucial information regarding ticket sales and are essential for our financial operations.

To ensure that we don't miss any critical notifications, we have reverted the email system back to our previous provider, Roundcube Webmail. This is only a temporary solution while we work to address the underlying configuration issue.

We are actively working with both Google and Ecwid to resolve the email routing problem. Our goal is to implement a solution that allows us to fully utilize Google Workspace while ensuring that all emails, particularly those from Ecwid, are delivered reliably.

Key Points:

- **Google Workspace Access:** We currently have access to Google Workspace productivity tools, but our email system remains on Roundcube Webmail.
- **No Data Loss:** All emails and ticket sale data are secure. There was no loss of information during this transition.
- **Technical Issue:** The problem lies in the configuration of email routing, specifically with how emails from Ecwid are handled by Google Workspace.
- **Resolution in Progress:** We are actively working to resolve this issue and will provide another update as soon as we have a permanent solution in place.

I apologize for any inconvenience this may cause. We are committed to finding a reliable and seamless solution that will allow us to leverage the benefits of Google Workspace while maintaining the integrity of our communication systems. Please feel free to reach out if you have any questions or concerns.

Treasurer's Report – Laura Barlow

- **Balance Sheet as of May 16, 2024**

The balance remaining in the Italy fund will be used to pay for printing costs and any other misc. tour expenses.

Restricted Operating Reserve now shows a balance of \$40,000 as directed by the Board. Any interest earned by the CD and Savings account will be returned to the operating budget. I couldn't transfer money from the Savings account to a CD because the bank required a signed copy of the minutes authorizing the transfer.

- **Profit and Loss Statement as of May 16, 2024**

The bottom line (net income) looks pretty good right now because most of our donations for the year have come in. I anticipate another \$15,000 in expenses yet to come in.

- **Development Committee Spreadsheet as of May 16, 2024**

Still looking to come up with another \$5800 to meet our fund-raising goal which includes half an orchestra. A nice effort on ad sales this spring by the choir improved our bottom line.

- **Fundraising**

Grant Applications Status

Oregon Arts Commission – Received \$2363 in late January. Have submitted grant application for next year.

James F. and Marion L Miller Foundation – Received \$2100. Will apply again in Sept.

Oregon Community Foundation – Declined to fund grant. Will apply again in Sept.

Carpenter Foundation – Scott has submitted a grant application.

ADDITIONAL: Laura Barlow shared the ticket sales spreadsheet. Steve Thomas pointed out research shows that attendance for the Performing Arts is down 30% across the board.

Mary Van Wesep, ticket manager, brought up her concerns regarding ticket sales. She asked that the topic be put on the August board retreat agenda.

To access the full profit and loss (P&L) report, contact treasurer Laura Barlow

ACTION ITEM REVIEW

- *ACTION ITEM: Mark will notify the choir of the new Winter concert dates* **DONE** PENDING
- *ACTION ITEM: Mark will ask Michael Zuzel to make a recording at the April 23 rehearsal* **DONE** PENDING
- *ACTION ITEM: Steve will empower Michael Zuzel to ask George Peterson to take photos of the choir along with asking George what compensation he wants for doing the job.* **DONE** PENDING
- *ACTION ITEM: Steve will check with Howie to determine Daniele's availability to do a workshop for us at the August retreat* **DONE.** PENDING
- *ACTION ITEM: Steve will poll the board on choice of dates for our August board retreat* **DONE** PENDING
- *ACTION ITEM: The Technology task force and Communications task force will collaborate to develop a YouTube sample* **DONE** **PENDING**

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Andrew Klein discovered that Jim Abdo has all our songs on digital file making them easy to access.

- *ACTION ITEM: Laura will ask Scott to investigate whether or not we can get permission to use SOU's box office rather than having to set up our own.* **DONE** PENDING

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Scott Nelson decided not to ask SOU for permission based on past history.

- *ACTION ITEM: Howie will add Google analytics to the website to tract user activity* **DONE** PENDING
- *ACTION ITEM: Members need to update their emergency contact information to make sure their contact is someone off site* **DONE** **PENDING**

ACTION ITEM: *Members will be asked to update their emergency contact information at the 2024 Fall registration.*

OLD BUSINESS

OUTREACH

Mary Bergstrom wanted to check in with Mark Reppert to determine is Outreach is still an endeavor we want to pursue as a choir. She expressed concerns about the expense of it. Mark assured the board that even though there can be glitches from time to time (as experienced at one school this year), Outreach is an important thing we do.

He, for one, would like to see it continue. Some suggestions of schools to visit next year were shared. Mary B. pointed out that in the past we have received funding for Outreach through a Rotary grant. We have not been granted that money for the last several times we have done Outreach.

ACTION ITEM: Laura Barlow will put the Rotary grant on her list of grants to apply for.

NEW BUSINESS

OLLI OPEN HOUSE

Sally Peterson, requests permission to participate in the OLLI Open House again this year (see her letter below). She is offering to pay for all printing costs, as she has done in the past.

[ATTN:] Steve and Shawn,

Once again, we have been invited to have a promotional table at the OLLI Open House. The date is Tuesday, August 6th. The time frame is 1-4. It is a big event in the Stevenson Union at SOU. About 700 people attend.

They [SOU] will provide the table and chairs. We will need two people for about 1 ½ hours each. I'll be happy to set up at 12:30 and do the first shift.

In the past, Shawn, you have created postcards. Last year, one side had Come Sing With Us announcing auditions. The other side had our winter concerts. It's a great marketing tool and doesn't cost too much. In fact, I think I donated the cost of printing the postcards at Pacific Crest. I'd be willing to do that again. We had 200 at \$175.00 total.

Please confirm that we can do it again.

*Thanks,
Sally*

We will do it! The following board members signed up to assist Sally. Laura Barlow, Michele Kyle, Mary Bergstrom.

ACTION ITEM: Steve will let Sally know that the Olli Open House is a GO!

Andrew suggested that besides advertising choir auditions at the Olli Open House we get the word out about auditions in additional ways. Suggestions are: FaceBook, church choirs, InstaGram.

ACTION ITEM: Michele will take the idea of broadening our area to attract potential singers to the Communications Task Force

POST CONCERT DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

- Michele Kyle shared her concerns that there is too much talking by choir members during rehearsals. Her concerns were shared by other board members. No action was taken.
- Water bottles on stage - The board has differing opinions about the use of water bottles on stage during a concert. Some ideas were kicked around including, but not limited to, supplying members with a Siskiyou Singers water bottle that can be purchased at registration.

ACTION ITEM: Andrew Klein will investigate the possibility of having a "Siskiyou Singers" official water bottle.

DEC. 2024 & JAN. 2025 CONCERT PROGRAM CONSIDERATIONS

The board was asked to discuss the following items from Shawn Shaffer and Sally Peterson. RE: Things to do and/or consider regarding our Dec 2024 and Jan 2025 concert programs. (Shawn and Sally's comments will be in *italics*. Board responses will be in **bold**)

- *Will the Dec 2024 concert be referred to as "Christmas Concert" or "Concert for the Season"?*

We will call it the Holiday Concert.

- *Consider silent auction with businesses donating their services or products in trade for program ads to help pay for the costs of a free Dec 2024 concert*
- *Need to prepare tickets for January 2025 concert in time to sell them at December 2024 concert*

We will not need printed tickets for the December 2024 concert since it is to be a donation only event

- *Announce January 2025 concert in December 2024 program*

We will announce the January 2025 concert at the December 2024 concert and we will have tickets ready to sell.

- *Consultation with Mark and Shawn about concert themes and music to start preparing graphic art for programs for both concerts*

ACTION ITEM: Mark will get together with Shawn to discuss the graphic design

- *Sally wonders how we track audience attendance i.e., free tickets to attend or what? What happens if the number of people wanting to attend is beyond the capacity of the SOU Music Recital Hall?*

The board threw around additional suggestions and questions regarding the winter concerts.

- Will we use risers for Dec 2024 concert? ***This is yet to be determined.*** (Note: We need to reserve the moving truck provided for free by the storage company well in advance. We had to buy \$114 for a U-Haul this last concert.)
- Have posters for the January 2025 concert available at the December 2024 concert. The posters could have a QR code to get people to a site to easily buy tickets.
- Let people reserve tickets online
- Have a raffle at the December concert, using raffle tickets
- Have a Silent Auction at the December concert. Members could put together baskets to bid on.

ACTION ITEM: Andrew will look into a Silent Auction App

- Get sponsors for the concerts

ACTION ITEM: Inga will reach out for sponsors.

- Include Spanish songs in the second half of the January 2025 concert.
- Provide flyers in both English and Spanish
- Keep graphics playful for the December concert

ACTION ITEM: Mark will inform Shawn of all decisions made regarding the 2024/2025 Winter concerts

ADDITIONAL: Inga Leed will be joining the Communications/Connections task force

ACTION ITEM COMMITMENTS – Mary Van Wesep read through the *ACTION ITEMS*.

FUTURE BOARD MEETING AGENDA ITEMS

- **ADDEMDUM TO BY-LAWS TO PERMIT ONLINE VOTING**
- **LOOK AT OUR MISSION STATEMENT**
- **TICKET SALES**

MOTION TO ADJOURN

Mary Bergstrom moved to adjourn. Seconded by Michele Kyle. MOTION PASSED.
Adjourned at 11:30 AM

NEXT BOARD MEETING:

**August 24 – Board Retreat
9:00 AM - 2:00 PM
Mary Van Wesep – 300 York Street - Ashland**