

Des Moines Community Orchestra Board of Directors meeting

Date: 1/5/2025

Location: Faith Lutheran Church

Attendees: Kevin A, Shaunda M, Krista B, Nick B, Larry B, Carl J, Curtis B

Members not present: Rebekah H.

Overview of the Messiah Concert

- The offering was not effectively handled/collected, with some audience members unable to contribute due to the collection baskets not getting all the way around.
 - The pastoral symphony was not repeated, leading to a shorter performance.
 - Musicians had to rush back to their positions, affecting the organization.
- The collection process was rushed, with insufficient time allocated for passing baskets.
 - Suggestions for Improvement:
 - Recruit audience members or non-performing participants to assist with collection.
 - Assign a point person to handle and secure the collected money.
 - Utilize the two diagonal aisles and middle aisles efficiently with a team of 4 people.
- Miscommunication with Akira: Akira, the conductor, initially assumed that the personnel manager would handle the soloist arrangements, leading to a misunderstanding. He then realized the community orchestra did not have a personnel manager.
- Guest Conductor Expectations: It was explained to Akira that guest conductors often help find performers if needed, a practice he was familiar with but did not follow this time.
- Soprano's Performance: The soprano, recommended by Brandon Rucker, performed excellently and was praised for her professionalism. She was contemplating leaving music but found renewed inspiration through this performance. She holds a DMA and teaches at a college, possibly Central or Simpson, and also teaches adjunctly at a high school.

Treasurer's Report – Shaunda Murphy

- Messiah concert brought in approximately \$1,400, consistent with previous years (\$1,400 last year and \$1,500 the year before).
- A Giving Tuesday campaign through JustGiving raised \$170.
- An additional \$22 was received from Thrivent, though the donor was not identified.
- Prairie Meadows Grant Application - Deadline: February 28th
 - Purpose: Request funds for instruments, not operational expenses.
 - Requirements: Detailed list of requested items and costs.
 - Instrument Wish List
 - Items: Contrabassoon, speaker/amp, keyboard, conga stands, marimba, field drum, orchestra bells, chime cover, new timpani head.
 - Next Steps: Collaborate with Josh to prioritize and update the wish list.
- The organization did not receive the Bankers Trust grant, which was applied for with a request of \$50,000.
- Bravo Follow-Up Meeting - A follow-up meeting with Bravo is scheduled for January 20th at 3:30 PM, at 801 Grand, Suite 250.

- The meeting can be attended in person or virtually, with a preference for in-person attendance.
- The purpose is to discuss funding allocations and gather feedback on DEI criteria.
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Discussion
 - There is a need to clarify what Bravo is looking for in terms of diversity, equity, and inclusion.
 - The organization plans to address the challenges of meeting DEI criteria in a predominantly homogeneous region.
 - Discussion points include the inclusion of diverse composers and members, and the challenges of assessing diversity based on appearance.
- Communication with Rich Gordley - Rich did not receive podium notes for the concerts, leading to delays in email communications.
 - John receives requests from the website and forwards them to Rich, who manages the mailing list.
- CD Maturity -January 19th, Amount: \$3,903. Determine the best interest rate and duration for reinvestment.
- Savings endowment will decrease as funds are moved for dues.
- Corporate Contributions: Significant contributions received through employee matching programs from companies like Wells Fargo and Principal.
- Shaunda M reviewed the financial statement, noting various expenses and contributions.
- \$1,700 was allocated to the administrative account for corporate contributions.
- Nick B mentioned a special opportunity for individuals aged 70 or older to donate directly from an IRA to a qualified charity without paying income tax.

Membership Report

- Krista B discussed efforts to engage members and collect dues, noting challenges with some members.

President's Report – Kevin Allemagne

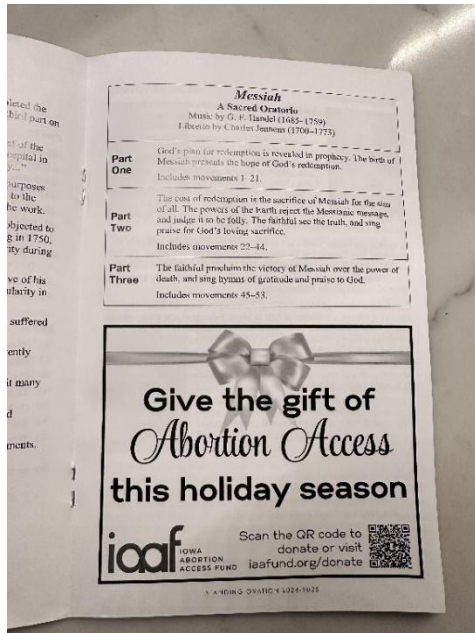
Social Media and Posters

- Hoang's daughter, Oanh Bui, completed the design of concert poster for Winter concert.
- Discussion on a Facebook post with a snowflake background that lacked information.
- Decision to have Kathy Naja handle social media updates, with Oanh providing the formats.

Publicity Efforts

- Kevin A suggested reaching out to TV stations for concert publicity.
- Mentioned contacts like Jon Busby and Max Schaefer.
- Discussion on the challenges of obtaining free public service announcements (PSAs) from certain channels.

Program and Ad Concerns



Feedback on Messiah Program-

Carl received complaints about an ad in the Messiah program.

Carl & Kevin A addressed the complaints, explaining the situation and defending the organization's actions.

The issue was resolved with printer after clarification.

Kevin A expressed frustration over an advertisement issue, noting that it was not intentional and involved ad revenue placement after the outer shell was printed.

Upcoming Audition Details

- Kevin A said the upcoming auditions for 2nd bassoon position are scheduled for 1/18.
 - Two confirmed candidates have shown interest, with a potential third candidate.
 - Kevin A explained that the audition would involve Kristen and two woodwind members, with others welcome to attend.
 - The rationale is that woodwind players are best suited to judge their peers.
 - Discussed the possibility of conducting a blind audition, though logistical challenges were noted. It was suggested using a stage curtain to facilitate a blind audition, though concerns about sound quality were raised.
 - The simplest solution is to hold it in the current space with judges facing one direction and participants entering from the opposite door.
 - All judges must agree not to turn around to maintain anonymity.
 - Tentatively set for early morning, around 10 o'clock.

Future Auditions

- Spring Auditions: Likely to occur for the second oboe position.
- Communication: Wind players and percussionists are encouraged to inform if they won't return, to facilitate timely auditions.

Personnel Updates

- Trumpet Position - Jonah will be on military duty next year.
- Temporary Replacement: Steve Newman will assume the first trumpet position temporarily.
- Substitute Arrangements: The principal will manage substitutes, with Steve Billingsley as a potential candidate.

Tallgrass Musical Update

- Chosen Musical: "REDACTED" has been selected but not yet publicly announced.
- Performance Dates: Scheduled for June 12th-14th, with a rain date on the 18th.
- A conductor is needed as Carl will not be available.

Woodwind Quintet and Small Ensembles

- Past Engagements: Historically, ensembles have performed voluntarily, with donations sometimes benefiting the orchestra.
- Union Considerations: Discussion on whether ensembles need to be unionized for paid performances.
- Promotion Efforts: Attempts to promote the orchestra and small ensembles have encountered some resistance from union leadership.
- Von Maur Engagements: Performances were done voluntarily, with no confirmed funding received despite initial discussions.
- Used QR codes on sheets to increase visibility.

Rehearsal Planning

- Rehearsal Schedule: There is ample time for rehearsals, unlike the previous fall. The group can start rehearsing for the May concert at their convenience.
- Challenges with Instrumentation
 - Third Clarinet Issue: Difficulty in finding a third clarinet player for two pieces, one in A and one in B flat. The parts are doubled, so the absence of a third clarinet is manageable.

Update on Conductor Search

- Phil's Withdrawal: Phil decided to drop out due to personal reasons, including wanting to visit his daughter in England more often.
- Concert Assignments: The group plans to assign specific concerts to candidates to evaluate their fit and interaction with the orchestra.
- Jonathan's Availability: Jonathan prefers to conduct in February or May rather than the fall, but he can adjust to any schedule. He is coordinating with the symphony's schedule and is considering programming Schumann No. 1.
- Proposed Assignments:
 - Kara in the fall
 - Josh in February
 - Jonathan in the spring
- A spreadsheet detailing past performances and the library is available. It was initially sent to Phil, who requested it, but will be resent to all conductors for reference.
- Coordination with venue scheduling is ongoing. Priority is given to professors and other groups, but there is usually ample availability for the orchestra.
- A soft approval has been received for the proposed concert dates, with March 1st being a key date for final confirmations.

Winter Concert Photography

- A photographer is tentatively scheduled for the winter concert on the 23rd.
- Photos will be taken on the performance day
- Participants are encouraged to cooperate and quickly get their photos taken.

Director's Report

- Carl offered to host a sorting party in his basement to organize files and materials.
- Shaunda M proposed involving librarians to assist in sorting and organizing materials and emphasized the need to match physical items with the spreadsheet inventory, ensuring everything is listed correctly.
- Ensure clear communication and role definitions for future performances to avoid misunderstandings like those with Akira.
 - Verify performers' preparedness and resource needs well in advance to prevent last-minute issues like those experienced with Austin.
- Ensure podium notes are sent to Rich for future concerts.
- Secure brass players for the Festive Overture performance.
- Discuss logistics for the Farewell Symphony performance.

Next Board meeting – February 16, 2025 at 2:00pm at Faith Lutheran Church, Clive

Meeting was adjourned at 4:15pm