



2023-2024 Season

June 6, 2023 Board Meeting

## AGENDA AND MEETING MINUTES

### I. Call to Order – 7:03 pm, KCL Engineering, West Des Moines

- Board members present:
  - Michael Ramirez
  - Angela Aldridge
  - Krista Baskerville
  - Hoang Bui
  - Shaunda Murphy
- Board members not present: Lawrence Brennan (refer to Election of New Officers section below), Rich Gordley
- Also present: JR Deeds, Nick Brown
- It was noted that we have a quorum.

### II. Opening Remarks of the President

- Mike Ramirez is presiding over the meeting.
- Mike noted that Carl Johnson, Josh Whitver and himself checked out New Hope church in Urbandale as a potential new location for future DMCO concerts and/or rehearsals. Mike noted it is a very workable space and the church would not charge for use of the space. One issue is there is no storage space within the church. Mike noted discussing with them that if they could find just some storage space for us, we could store what is needed for the current concert. Regarding everything else that would need to be stored (music library, instruments owned by DMCO, etc.) – Mike noted that the fees for a month-to-month climate-controlled storage space would cost less than the fees we pay to Drake for our concerts. The church has a pit located behind the stage. Mike has pictures of the space. We may consider trying this for concerts for the 2023-2024 DMCO season. We have signed a contract with Grace for our rehearsal space, but have not signed a contract yet with Drake for our concerts. Mike noted the church would be open to having the Messiah also. Mike noted there is plenty of space for post-concert receptions, and preconcert talks. The church also has a tech consultant and “all the right” tech equipment – which means the possibility to use this for recordings. This would be something to think about, we can think about this through the summer. Besides the storage space, another issue with the church is that our concerts could not be on Sundays – would probably need to be Saturdays.
  - Thoughts discussed regarding our current locations for rehearsals/concerts: it is around \$2500 each concert for the rehearsal space and performance/dress rehearsal space, there was/may still be a plan for Drake to redevelop the main parking lot that we utilize for dress rehearsals/concerts into multiuse residential, and during election season there is a chance we’ll be bumped again from utilizing Drake during that time.

- JR noted that the Central Iowa Wind Ensemble (CIWE) has contemplated moving concerts to Friday/Saturday nights – this would give the ensemble an opportunity to redefine the audience.
- Mike noted another idea he had been thinking about; nothing that we would take action on soon. CIWE is the only professional-quality wind band in the metro; DMCO is not the only professional-quality orchestra in the metro. Mike’s idea is to potentially rebrand as a pops orchestra since Des Moines does not have this (like the Boston Pops). There could then be potential to partner with IPTV all year, which would help with advertising. Pops music would be the end of our live streaming (licensing issues). This could also help with grant money from organizations such as BRAVO, as this would make finding music from other continents easier. More traditional pieces could be interspersed. A pops orchestra gives the opportunity to just play certain movements of pieces if we would like whereas with a traditional orchestra this is typically not done. We could perform a sample concert of what a pops concert would be.
- Mike noted a temporary relocation for our concerts may be in our one-year plan, with the potential for rebranding in our five-year plan. The rebranding would require open discussions. In the short term, we need to find a way to cut down on expenses.
- During this discussion Shaunda noted that her employer is donating \$1000 to DMCO.
- It was asked if we were considering going digital with our concert programs instead of utilizing Standing Ovation. JR noted that CIWE does not print any programs. JR noted that CIWE has an announcer during their concerts. If Standing Ovation was not utilized, making updates to musicians would be easy (with Standing Ovation, this needs to be known and communicated weeks ahead of time).
- Regarding the Treasurer position, it was noted that QuickBooks is moving to a subscription model. It is now a large fee for anyone who needs to use it.

### III. Secretary Report

- The annual meeting occurred on May 23, 2023. Minutes from that meeting were distributed via email. It was asked if there were corrections or comments regarding the minutes.
  - Shaunda had provided updates via email to Angela prior to the meeting, which were incorporated.
  - Krista noted that during the annual meeting, it was asked if the DMCO By-Laws could be added to DMCO’s website. Angela will ask John Sens to post them on our website. DONE 6/11/23
  - Krista also asked if the QR code that links to our donation site could be put in the concert programs.
  - It was moved to accept the minutes into official record, and all Board members accepted. The minutes were accepted into official record, and Angela will contact John Sens to post the minutes to the DMCO website. DONE 6/11/23

### IV. Election of New Officers

- Lawrence Brennan notified the Board that he would not be able to serve on the DMCO Board due to a significant life change and resigned from the Board effective immediately. **Kevin Allemagne, Jenn Voss, Nick Brown, and Kara Mather were**

**noted as potential replacements. It was mentioned that Kara started a community orchestra in another town. It was not officially decided how to move forward.**

- Mike noted that we can move forward for voting with a full slate, with a vacancy:
  - President – Mike Ramirez
  - Vice President – Vacancy
  - Treasurer – Shaunda Murphy
  - Secretary – Angela Aldridge
  - Board members At Large – Rich Gordley, Krista Baskerville, Hoang Bui
- Mike Ramirez moved to accept the full slate with a vacancy, Shaunda Murphy provided the 1<sup>st</sup>, Krista Baskerville seconded, and all moved. The DMCO Board for the 2023-2024 season is as noted above (with a vacancy).
- **Paperwork will need to be done with Banker's Trust for the new Treasurer. Mike noted that Shaunda will need the minutes of this Board meeting to have the bank signature card changed over to her. Shaunda is going to contact Carl Johnson about the signature card.** Shaunda noted that she does not have QuickBooks, but she has Quicken.

#### V. Treasurer Report

- Carolyn Knittle (previous Treasurer) provided the following information via email:
  - Financial statements and the bank reconciliations as of 5/31/23.
  - Carolyn noted that she booked payables for Carl and the live streaming of the May concert – Angela assumes this means those need Board approval to pay. Carolyn sent the invoice for the video production and live streaming of the May concert to us on 6/1. Mike noted that these expenses can be paid (do not need Board approval). Angela will follow-up with Carolyn with Shaunda copied. DONE 6/12/23
  - Carolyn does not have the Drake invoice for the May concert yet.
  - Carolyn noted there have been no donations deposited for the May concert except what came through Just Giving.
  - Carolyn noted she would be sending updated dues reports to Krista.
- Shaunda asked what is the procedure for paying bills? Mike noted that “normal” bills do not need Board approval. Approval is needed for asset purchases, as well as for some music purchases.
- It was asked if there were any other questions regarding the Treasurer Report. There were none, and the financials as of 5/31/2023 were approved as distributed, accepted into official record and will be posted on the DMCO website along with the minutes of this meeting.

#### VI. Set Date for next Board Meeting

- **Monday, July 10<sup>th</sup>, 6:30 pm start time. Location is TBD. Shaunda offered her home.**

#### VII. New or Unfinished Business:

- During the May concert, Jonah Tibbits (DMCO trumpet) filmed/recorded the concert, and Jimmy Dooling (DMCO trumpet) helped set up the equipment. It was discussed that if they have the ability to do this, we should not need to pay an outside party to do this. Shaunda asked why we have not asked the membership in the past about roles like fundraising and videography, regarding who in the group already has these

- talents/abilities so that we do not need to hire out these roles? It was noted that we need to do a better job of just asking who has these talents.
- Presentation of Carolyn's card and plaque to Carolyn – when/how should this occur? Hoang noted she gave the card to Carl, and that Carl said he would deliver it to Carolyn.
  - Laura asked Angela to extend her gratitude to the Board and Carl for the gift.
  - Post office box – renewal fee of \$294 for the PO Box number 1796 is due on 6/30/23. The renewal fee will automatically be charged to the credit card associated with the PO Box on 6/15/23. Do we want this to renew and if so, someone needs to make sure the credit card info on file with them is still correct (expiration date).
    - Mike noted that Laura gave Mike the key back to the post office box. The post office box location downtown is not ideal for anyone on the Board. Mike noted that there is no reason we could not have a smaller box. Music is shipped to the Librarian's house. **Mike noted he would check on 6/7 the cost difference of having a smaller box.**
  - Discussion with JR Deeds regarding the Central Iowa Wind Ensemble (CIWE).
    - JR noted that he wants to be a resource for DMCO. JR's observations of DMCO:
      - Biggest issue is the need for more revenue. It is difficult to start asking for money, but the more it is done, the easier it is. Some grants can be reapplied for year after year.
      - It does not appear that DMCO has out of control spending – it just takes money to run an organization. CIWE is not spending much more than DMCO.
      - It appears that in the past, DMCO had a better system for making things happen/asking for money. This needs to be the highest priority. Employers, banks, financial advisors, real estate agents – take note of who you are doing business with. The turning point for CIWE is when Rich Thimmesch spent a lot of effort figuring this out for CIWE. Rich asked potential donors, and made it happen. Rich is now CIWE's Executive Director which has been a volunteer position, but may be a paid position at some point.
      - Within two years, CIWE was able to purchase a whole set of percussion equipment and bought chairs and stands. CIWE has about a year's worth of expenses saved up and has a good understanding that they can raise \$30-40K next year.
      - Rich Thimmesch discovered that especially with government-related organizations, donors want to know how the organization is helping the community. CIWE has invited 2-3 organizations per concert to partner together for the concert and set up tables for those organizations outside of the concert. This raises awareness for those organizations, and those organizations advertise the concerts. BRAVO appreciates these types of efforts as this is a way to have a bigger impact on the community.
      - Mike noted that we should start thinking about how to help BRAVO think of DMCO differently than other similar groups like the Des

Moines Symphony? Shaunda asked if BRAVO is a grant application process, and Mike answered yes.

- Nick asked JR who is responsible for making the spending decisions for CIWE? JR noted that the Board has to approve the budget. JR noted that CIWE also brought on a not-for-profit consultant who is helping them tremendously, such as with marketing support, budget, financials, strategic planning, running CIWE's social media – and CIWE wrote a grant to pay for their fees. The firm is Ferrone Olson ([ferroneolson.com](http://ferroneolson.com)) and is run by two people, Paul and Holly. Mike believes it would be worth looking into Ferrone Olson. JR noted that someone coming in to help is helpful – will talk through items such as what are we going to do for the next year and from that, what is the most important thing and how can it be split up? Shaunda asked about Jenn Voss and noted that before we hire someone, we should reach out to our own people who may have these same talents.
  - CIWE has done well with corporate sponsors. CIWE's next mission is to find individual sponsors, to widen the reach of individual donors. Government and foundational donors want to see strength in individual donors.
  - Overall philosophy – identify the need, and find a solution.
  - It was noted that we pay Carl as our Music Director/Conductor, and Carl generously gives the money back to DMCO. At the point when we need a new Music Director/Conductor, we are potentially going to have a large new expense.
  - JR noted that we should think about what is a reasonable \$ goal to get to? And then figure out who to ask. Mike noted the family who owns the Des Moines skate park, the Lauridsens, could be one potential option as they underwrote all of the music for the Music Under the Stars season. JR noted that we should research who is supporting other fine arts organizations in town and start asking them also.
- Concert location for 2023-2024 season – THIS WAS DISCUSSED IN THE OPENING REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT SECTION ABOVE.
    - What is the process with Drake regarding reviewing a contract; have they sent us anything yet?
    - Discussion regarding potentially moving to New Hope church in Urbandale for concerts. Contact information received from Josh Whitver: James Weaver is the Founding Pastor. Email = [james@newhope.church](mailto:james@newhope.church), cell 515-778-4524.
    - Noted issues with Drake: lack of communication from Drake, parking situation, safety concerns regarding the area outside of Drake, safety concerns with the stairs inside Sheslow, cost, student employees who do not help/are not engaged.
  - During the annual meeting, one member asked if we were receiving a refund from Grace UMC for all of the rehearsal time/space we did not utilize in April. It was answered that we are currently not aware that we will be receiving a refund. Angela

- noted she will look into receiving a refund from Grace UMC. Thoughts on pursuing this? THIS WAS NOT DISCUSSED.
- Potential grants – a “packet” of information regarding DMCO needs to be created to simplify the process of asking for money and applying for grants. It was noted during the meeting that this packet needs to be resurrected. Lynn Messina (used to play viola with DMCO) would present the packets to the orchestra.
    - Kara Mather (violin I) sent Angela an email that West Bank offers a lot of grant money for organizations like DMCO. Kara’s husband works there. The next round of grant applications is due July 1<sup>st</sup>. The dollar amounts of the grant requests are usually between \$500-\$7500, but could potentially be more if someone was to call Jill Hansen (the Executive Director of West Bank’s Foundation) regarding a long-term commitment.  
[https://www.westbankstrong.com/about\\_us/west\\_bancorporation\\_foundation](https://www.westbankstrong.com/about_us/west_bancorporation_foundation) **During the meeting, Shaunda said she would look into this.**
    - Josh Whitver (percussion) sent Angela an email with Hy-Vee’s donation request form. Josh has a friend who works at Hy-Vee and noted that the form attached to the email can be completed and emailed to [Jeilah.seely-bresley@hy-vee.com](mailto:Jeilah.seely-bresley@hy-vee.com). It mentions their gift giving strategy is in support of, among other things, the cultural enrichment of children (perhaps a sponsor of the annual Fall children’s concert?).
    - We have not submitted for Farm Bureau Financial Services’ grant for awhile. Angela works there.
    - Thoughts on working with the Des Moines Community Partnership – it was noted that their assistance is free of charge. Krista noted during the meeting that Jenn Voss has contacted the Des Moines Community Partnership.
    - DMOS – another grant request idea. Deb Gordley had worked there.
    - During the meeting, JR noted we should look into Facebook, Google and Bankers Trust.
    - **During the meeting, Nick noted he would follow-up with GuideOne.**
  - DMCO budget discussion, including a fundraising goal – THIS DISCUSSION WAS TABLED
  - Larry’s email regarding DMCO Strategic Planning – Larry has offered to draft this for us for the Board’s review. Items Larry requested: THIS DISCUSSION WAS TABLED
    - DMCO Values and/or Beliefs statements. If we don't have this handy, these can be developed.
    - The Mission Statement of the DMCO. Again, if we don't have this, we can develop one.
    - I can take ideas and aspirations from past agendas, our annual meeting, and our discussion next week to begin the planning process. It should be relatively straightforward. Think of this process as clay on a pottery wheel, with the final shape reflecting our goals and priorities.
    - What short-term and longer term goals does the Board want to see in a plan? Just come with some ideas (broad or detailed) in mind to share.
    - When the plan has taken more shape, we will share it with the membership at large for their feedback and additional ideas.



- Larry's agenda addition: There were some excellent suggestions at our annual meeting. One that jumped out at me was to offer an additional performance involving a smaller ensemble. What do we think this would look like? This may be more of a planning topic, but I wanted to capture it for further discussion. THIS DISCUSSION WAS TABLED
- Issues with collecting dues throughout the season – thoughts on this process? THIS DISCUSSION WAS TABLED
- Concert programs – should we consider other options besides Standing Ovation? Electronic programs? THIS DISCUSSION WAS TABLED
- Greg Woolever would like to pass the task of the announcements during concerts to someone else. Shaunda noted during the meeting that we need to ask the membership who would like to do this. JR noted that CIWE pays their announcer \$150 per concert. Shaunda noted that we need to ask someone else to be in charge of the concert posters also.
- Personnel Officer – Nick Brown. Drafting a job description for Board discussion/approval before Fall concert rehearsals start.
- Director of Development – Jennifer Voss. Drafting a job description for Board discussion/approval before Fall concert rehearsals start.
- Soloist pay and concert costs – need a DMCO policy. THIS DISCUSSION WAS TABLED
- The Board needs to brainstorm all DMCO duties, document them, and make sure they are assigned out. The last page of these minutes includes a form we used to use. THIS DISCUSSION WAS TABLED
- Transition plan for Carl Johnson's future retirement from the director position. THIS DISCUSSION WAS TABLED
- Reminder: the Grace rental agreement was finalized and signed for the 2023–2024 season; next payment of \$875 due 8/15/2023, followed by \$875 due 12/15/2023 (total of \$1,750 for the season).

VIII. Any Other Business for the Good of the Order

- JR noted that Google, etc. offer free drives for nonprofit organizations. JR noted that CIWE utilizes Microsoft Teams. We are in need of some sort of cloud drive where information can be stored and accessed by multiple people.
- Regarding our DMCO Facebook page, it was noted that we need to assign someone to do posts periodically (perhaps weekly). We believe that Kathy Naja is posting somewhat regularly. It was noted that posts can be scheduled out. JR noted that CIWE does Facebook ads, which is push advertising.
- **Mike noted that he will be putting together an email to the membership regarding posters, programs, concert announcements, grants, etc.**
  - Nick has a family member interested in doing the posters.
  - Hoang's daughter provides the program designs for free.
  - **Nick noted that he will ask someone about being a concert announcer.**
  - JR recommended that if we are sending out an email asking people to take on tasks, that the email should include a short description of the task.
  - It was noted that our DMCO logo may need some updating.

IX. Adjournment – 9:08 pm

## DMCO Board Officers and Committees

Officer and committee positions; some committee positions are filled by non-Board volunteers:

President	_____
Vice President	_____
Secretary	_____
Treasurer	_____
Membership Oversight	_____
Dues collection	
Membership eligibility records	
Fund Raising	_____
Personnel	
Membership roster	_____
Recruitment	_____
Publicity (Oversight)	_____
Website, programs, posters, etc.	_____
Newspaper, radio, other sources	_____
Bulk mailing	_____
Logistics	
Jobs list	_____
Concert dates and venues	_____
Equipment transportation	_____
Librarian / Music acquisition	_____
Internet address contact	_____
Social	_____
Liason with Drake catering	
Flowers for guest performers	
First rehearsal get-together	
Potluck/Annual Meeting	