

## **Draft of October 20, 2024 Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Directors, The Master Singers of Lexington**

**Attending:** Adam Grossman, Music Director; Clark Jarvis, Treasurer; Tom Hanold; Lydia Light; Becky Linton, President; Haris Papamichael; Lindsey Nicholson, Secretary; Alison Weaver.

**Absent:** Grant Hicks

### **Agenda:**

- Approval of September Meeting's Minutes
- Treasurer's Report
- Music Director's Report
- Plan for Recording
- Postcards for December Concert
- Seating at Rehearsals
- Other Business/Next Meeting

1. **Approval of September Meeting's Minutes** - Minutes from September meeting were approved unanimously.

#### **2. Treasurer's Report**

- a. We are doing fine with cash; almost everyone has paid their dues. We have received a few donations, and some early donations have been larger than usual.
- b. If people keep bumping up with their donations we may have enough to cover our expenses for the year. Right now we are about \$2500 higher than usual with donations.
- c. Becky asked, did the fall letter do anything? People are donating more and at least one person made an additional donation. No donations have come in yet from outside the chorus. Clark will check paypal - we may have gotten one there.
- d. Expenses are running as we expect. They raised the permit fee for the postcards which is now up to \$350 per year. The permit buys us the ability to send bulk mail and gives us a discount on the concert postcards (~65% of the price); it's better to maintain the permit, rather than let it lapse and renew it. We don't know what the process would be to cancel/reapply. Becky will check on this.
- e. Clark got the hardware for handling credit cards, so we can use credit cards moving forward.
- f. David Getty's Gift
  - i. David provided an additional gift for the endowment fund.
  - ii. We will make sure that the David and Sara Getty Endowment fund is mentioned in the program, assuming David agrees. There are no restrictions on the income, but we agreed with David that we won't use the principal unless we have to.

- iii. Becky sent David a thank you note last time and will plan to send him another one.
- iv. After fees we got around 3-4% cash earnings last year; we are hoping it will be a little better this year. Clark budgeted \$1500 from it this year; next year, will be able to use more than that, ideally ~\$3000 with the increased gift.
- g. We could potentially name a commission or soloist funded by the endowment. If we're spending the money anyway, it would be good to earmark/title it to recognize it every time we use it. We would want to check with David to make sure he's ok with this.
- h. Clark is administering the fund right now; Chris is another signatory (since he was President at the time). These are index funds requiring minimal management.
- i. Could we have holiday instruments paid by the Getty Fund? Not yet - the money hasn't earned income yet this year; holiday instruments are usually around \$4000-5000.
- j. David encouraged people to contribute to the fund. However, an endowment drive would need to be separate (a special targeted letter to a few people) asking for larger donations; we can't sacrifice our normal contributions, since we rely on this income. We have an operating fund problem that is bigger than the need for donating to the endowment. The board decided that we will not be encouraging people to donate to the endowment.
- k. If there are people who want to give a significant gift to the endowment, it would be nice to recognize them in the program. We discussed the possibility of alums contributing, but most alums don't donate anymore.
- l. Clark will check the PO box to see if there are additional donations. He will also check to see if there are any donations from people who are not singing to see if the annual fund letter was successful. Clark typically tracks this separately and if there is anyone on the list that typically doesn't give, he'll make a note. All donors will be in the program as well.
- m. The note about the endowment fund is still in the program. We need to edit the language for the next program, since it was started 2 seasons ago. We could also add language about using these funds for commissions/soloists.

### **3. Music Director's Report**

- a. Attendance has not been great - we have 31 singers and we have had 31 absences.
- b. Adam has hired 4 out of 5 string players for the Christmas Concert.
- c. Upcoming Concert:
  - i. Adam had wanted the flutist to be able to spend some time preparing the flute piece on Wed, but had forgotten we will be in Pilgrim and won't have an extra room. He asked if we could use the room where we typically leave the coats at Pilgrim and if so, what it would cost. He would like to

- rent it if needed. Becky will check on this with the church to see if we can use the room. If not, Adam will need to arrange another rehearsal time.
- ii. We are going to put the sandwich board promoting the program at Pilgrim Church for this concert. For the rest of the concerts it will be at Emory Park.
- d. Children's Concert:
- i. Adam met with Angela and the repertoire has been confirmed. They didn't talk about room or food for the kids; he'll plan to discuss that next time they meet.
  - ii. Becky submitted the grant for the children's concert; asked for \$650. She will let the board know once she hears.
- e. We accepted Grace Abe as a new member into the chorus as a soprano.

#### **4. Plans for Recording**

- a. Ken (who has been recording the concerts) is on a concert-by-concert basis agreement with us and will be recording this first concert. He is planning on being at the Christmas concert unless we tell him otherwise.
- b. Clark has been in touch with his contact Cliff with a description of what we'd need for recording (date/time, equipment, the layout of the church, etc) to see if he might be able to record for us. Clark is waiting for a quote back, ideally next week.
- c. We are going to offer the same deal as we did last year to members for recordings: If people buy individual recordings it's \$25. If they pre-order/buy upfront, it's \$20. We'll encourage them to buy recordings of all concerts.
- d. We are committing to record all concerts this year; the board discussed how it is difficult not to record each concert since we have a commission at each concert.
- e. Discussed the topic of having Ken do the recordings but have Clark do the editing; it seems unlikely that this is feasible, but Clark will email to ask Ken if this would be a possibility.
- f. If we continue with Ken he needs to do a better job; he can't master a recording and have 20 seconds of people walking/dead space at the end.
- g. Clark will ask all of these questions to Ken and see what we get back from him.
- h. Haris will prepare an email to the members for the recording purchases.

#### **5. Postcards for December Concert**

- a. Discussed whether or not to do postcards for this December. Comments included:
  - i. If we are going to do postcards, we need to invest the money. Otherwise, let's just do virtual. Last year 250 postcards were \$140, and about another \$44 to mail, totalling about \$200 for each mailing.
  - ii. Traditionally Christmas is our best attended concert; not sure how much the mailing impacts this, but we wouldn't want to lose people/sabotage ourselves unintentionally. They could be coming as a result of the mailing.
  - iii. Friends and family come because of personal communication.

- iv. We could ask at the front - how did you hear about us? But we'd need to phrase it carefully, since most people come because they know someone. Anne Marie Lindquist did that at the March concert and most people either knew us or the composer. One person said they saw the card at the library.
- v. It's important to do what we can to get our name out there, particularly since we expect a high level of attendance for this concert. We aren't committing to postcards for all concerts, just thinking about the next one.
- vi. Even if attendance comes from choir members, the postcard is a way for us to spread the word.
- vii. It's a slight amount of extra work and effort, it's not too much money, but we don't know what the return is.
- viii. Some other choral groups have moved to electronic only; other groups continue to mail a postcard.
- ix. There is no alignment between our snail mail list and email list; to let everyone know we have to do both.
- x. We could have a laptop at the reception and get people to enter their email addresses, when they check in. Or we could have separate slips of paper where they could write their email and put it into a basket.
- xi. Another option would be to do this at the reception, since it has a different/warmer feel, and we have high yield for the reception. We will be doing a reception at Pilgrim.
- b. The board settled on the idea of having a welcome table at the reception at which we could collect email addresses.
- c. The board decided to print postcards for the December concert. Becky will let Chris and Grant know; Chris will inform David Grotrian/utilize the Vista Print connection.

## **6. Seating at Rehearsals**

- a. Discussed the idea of going back to our traditional seating arrangement.
- b. Challenges with current seating include:
  - i. The seating arrangement feels more crowded and is no more distanced/spacious than our previous seating.
  - ii. It's a different dynamic than we are used to.
  - iii. It's annoying when you are walking into the room, since there isn't as much of a clear pathway, though the priority should be the musical impact.
  - iv. Part of the reason we flipped the seating was due to the lighting issues, but they fixed the lighting.
- c. The board decided to switch back to our old seating arrangement after this concert/for the Christmas concert; Becky will announce to the group before the next concert so people aren't surprised.

## **7. Renewal of Renter's Insurance**

- a. Becky will get in touch with her contact at Hub International and check to see if it's still \$300. She will see if we can renew the renter's insurance without having to apply again. She will let us know if there is any increase in the cost, otherwise will move forward.
- b. It's a requirement from the administrator that we have renters insurance.

## **8. Raffle**

- a. Discussed whether or not we will do a raffle this year. Need to decide yes or no, and if yes, when. Comments/questions included:
  - i. Raffle was fun; members enjoyed it and so did friends! Fun thing to do at the reception. Feels special at Christmas especially.
  - ii. Question about how much we made this year via the raffle
  - iii. Re: timing, would it be weird to have this with all the kids around?
  - iv. Suggestion to make it more targeted:
    - 1. We could have prizes with jars and you can purchase tickets and then choose which jars to put your tickets in. Prizes could include things like a case of wine, a long weekend at a house on the cape, etc. You could put things in where you are the most interested to win.
    - 2. This approach would be more logistically difficult and would require more time.
    - 3. We could sell tickets when they arrive and then give them intermission to put tickets into jars. We could put prizes/jars in the lobby or back of the hall and then move them to the reception after the concert.
    - 4. We could push tickets during intermission - Revels does this effectively and has people sell raffle tickets during intermission and they sell a lot. We'd need a member or member's family to do this.
    - 5. Question: do people sell tickets in advance? Some people do this at work.
  - v. The board decided to move forward with the raffle, but discuss details on logistics/process later (in particular since Grant who typically manages the raffle was absent).
  - vi. The board decided that May would be the best time (to avoid the mayhem of the kids at the pops concert and since there is already so much happening around holiday time).

## **6. Other business?**

- a. Tickets - Randall is ready to go with the tickets and is going to go Tues or Wed to get them printed. Lydia will confirm with Randall that we are planning to print 6 tickets per member. The special text for this concert about free admission/donations welcome on our website fit well on the tickets. Lydia will continue to be the ticket liaison with Randall.
- b. Lindsey will send out an email message to our listserv on Monday 10/21 to promote this concert and will send a final reminder email to the listserv out a few days before the concert.

## **7. Next Meeting?**

- a. Our next meeting will be held on Sunday November 24 at 7pm using the same google meeting link.

The meeting was adjourned.