NYS/O-MLA Business Meeting Minutes  
Syracuse University  
Friday, October 25, 2019

Present: Jennifer Burr, David Peter Coppen, Jim Farrington (Chair), Rachel Fox Von Swearingen, Ivan Kaproth-Joslin, Beth Kelly (Web Editor), Kate LaVerne, James Mason, Rick McRae (Secretary/Treasurer), Lisa Philpott, Suzanne Meyers Sawa, Lenora Schneller (Past Chair), Kristina Shanton, Gerry Szymanski (Vice Chair/Chair Elect), Raya Lee Then

Chapter Chair Jim Farrington called the meeting to order at 4:05 PM.

1. Chair’s Report
   Jim acknowledged thanks to the following people:  
   Rachel Fox Von Swearingen, for hosting and handling local arrangements for the meeting, including co-organizing the program;  
   Gerry Szymanski, for co-organizing the program and introducing each speaker;  
   Beth Kelly, for managing the chapter’s web page;  
   Rick McRae, for handling the chapter’s finances;  
   Lenora Schneller, for her three years of service on the chapter Board;  
   Lenora Schneller and her Cornell colleagues, for the Zoom streaming setup for the meeting.  
   All the aforementioned each received a round of applause.  
   Jim also expressed appreciation to the student registrants from Syracuse for attending and presenting at the meeting (although neither Alicia Feathers nor Vivian Tomkins could be present at the business meeting).

Streaming: Jim asked Lenora to report on the streaming audience for the meeting. Lenora mentioned that there were three streaming view-points for the morning sessions, including at Toronto, and at least one in the afternoon. It was emphasized that each streaming point may include more than one person viewing. This was the second chapter meeting to be streamed, and it bodes well that we will continue live-streaming our future meetings.

Best of Chapters: Jim announced that NYSO and NEMLA submitted a joint-proposal to nominate one of the presentations from last year’s meeting for the MLA Best of Chapters. Unfortunately, it was not chosen. Jim encouraged members to submit suggestions for any of this chapter meeting’s presentations to go forward for next year’s MLA meeting’s BOC.

Chapter Dinner: Jim asked Lenora to report about last year’s chapter dinner at the St. Louis meeting. Lenora reported very positively about the high turnout and good spirit among the dinner attendees, including some colleagues from other chapters, who had attended last year’s joint meeting in Montreal. Jim called an informal show-of-hands for those who, during next year’s MLA Norfolk, prefer a breakfast meeting, a dinner
meeting, or no strong preference. The consensus seemed to indicate that either meal choice would be fine.

2. Secretary/Treasurer’s Report.
The membership figures of the chapter continue to indicate a gradual decline in recent years. For this year there are 23 members in current good standing—22 at the regular level and 1 at the student level. (Presumably there may be some longstanding members outstanding in their dues, who yet may make their payments.) In comparison with previous years, our chapter had 27 members last year, 30 in 2017 and 37 in 2016. As always, meeting location may be a factor in this decrease, but as national MLA membership numbers also seem on a parallel downward slope, our chapter seems to reflect this larger trend.

The financial report:

Balance in the U.S. bank account on July 1, 2019 $3,156.47
Balance in the Canadian bank account on July 1, 2019 893.59 (USD)
Total assets on July 1, 2019 $4,050.06

INCOME
Membership dues (US + CA) $225 (22 regular@$10 ; 1 student@$5)
Meeting registration 420 (13 regular@$30 ; 2 students@$15)
MLA Chapter Grants 0
Total income at meeting $625.00

EXPENSES
2019 Fall Meeting expenses $366.75 (catering)
75.00 (music)
PayPal Meeting charges* 18.04
PayPal Membership charges 24.00
Total Expenses (2019 meeting expenses incomplete) $453.79

Balance in the U.S. bank account on October 23, 2019 $3,815.64
Balance in the Canadian bank account on October 23, 2019 903.59 (USD)
Total assets from both bank accounts $4,719.23
Assets after Fall 2019 expenses $4,265.44

This represents a net increase in total assets from the period July 1, 2018 - June 30, 2019 of $215.36.

PayPal: We continue to utilize PayPal as a means of expediting payment, and all but 4 members took advantage of the service; the remainder preferring to pay by check. As you see, PayPal charges a slight fee for each transaction, and the fee is higher for Canada than for the US: for each $10 payment, PayPal fees are .59 for Americans and .74 for Canadians. Hence, this year a total of $24 went to PayPal for membership dues and registration fee payments.

Discussion about PayPal and other payment systems: Beth mentioned possible alternatives to PayPal, like Cash app and Venmo, but wondered whether they are as
secure, although they may charge less. Gerry surmised that they were all equally secure (or equally insecure). Kris suggested payment services offered through banks. Jim mentioned that several chapters use MLA itself as the single source for both national and chapter payments, and said that it was possible to pay for chapter membership, without necessarily being an MLA member. MLA handles credit-card transactions, remitting all payments directed to chapters.

Rachel raised the issue of whether going through Big-MLA would affect Canadian members; James reported that he has never had a problem with paying MLA, and Jim reminded that MLA’s Business Office handles international membership. Jim directed Rick to contact the MLA Business Office to explore the possibility of NYSO’s payments being part of MLA’s secure payment system. Rick will report via NYSO-L.

Suzanne asked whether NYSO might consider a dues increase, to offset PayPal’s charges. Jim responded that as the chapter’s finances are healthy and we have kept costs down for the most part, and as the possibility of bypassing PayPal altogether exists, there is no need to raise dues.

**Canadian Account:**
The Royal Bank of Canada account has seen little activity. In the past year it has only had one transaction. Suzanne said its US dollar (USD) account was formed years ago for local-meeting cash availability, linked to her own personal account. Because of newer banking technology and the complexity of changing signing officers (e.g., requiring a request-document on letterhead stationery), Suzanne advocated closing the Canadian account, and transferring its funds into the US account (KeyBank). Rick reported that the two other bi-national MLA chapters (Mountain/Plains and Pacific Northwest) have single accounts.

Jim called for a motion. It was moved by Suzanne and seconded by Kris to close the account and simplify our funds. Discussion: Rachel asked whether payments for Canadian meetings would be handled adequately, and Beth responded that bi-national transactions are easy, as they are electronically transmitted. The concern that future chapter Treasurers may be necessarily Americans was responded by James’ remark that future Chairs should be Canadians.

The motion passed unanimously. Rick thanked his predecessor Beth Kelly for her assistance and guidance.

3. **Membership renewal**
Jim reminded members to renew their membership if not already done so. It is still possible to join or renew membership at chapter meetings, this is discouraged, as members not in good current standing are ineligible to vote or run for any chapter office.

4. **NYSO Travel Grants**
Jim said there were no travel grants this year, as our present meeting location is a focal point for music librarianship students. We comped lunches for 2 students, and this trend may continue for future meetings.
5. **Election Results**
   Rick announced that Kris Shanton has been duly elected Vice Chair/Chair Elect, to take office at the close of the 2019 meeting.

6. **Goals**
   a. **Meeting location for 2020**
      James announced an invitation from University of Toronto as the site of our next year’s 2020 meeting.
      Additionally, Jim announced that David Peter Coppen suggests that the 2021 meeting be held at the Eastman School of Music, to coincide with the school’s centenary celebration.
   b. **Improving the NYSO Chapter Handbook**
      This remains as a goal for the Board to achieve in the 2020-2021 year.
   c. **Recruitment**
      Jim expressed hope that the students who attended this meeting continue to remain active on both the chapter and national levels.

7. **New Business**
   a. Jim asked about the current situation in Buffalo. Rick passed on some distressing news about the University at Buffalo Music Library’s present condition (non-replacement of vacant personnel lines, loss of financial-budget control, closure of music librarianship grad program, proposed relocation of collection, repurposing of physical facility), based on conversations with a former colleague there, and Raya shared further information. Jim asked whether we as an organization should make a formal response, such as a strongly-worded letter decrying this decision. Raya expressed that this would not make much difference in the long run, citing former experiences with the former Music Department of the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library—such decisions are, by and large, faits accomplis.
   b. Raya announced that an 8-foot concert harpsichord is available, free of charge, to anyone interested in one.
   c. Rachel emphasized the importance of the timely updating of the Chapter Handbook, especially pertaining to the roles and duties of chapter-meeting hosts, clearly delineating their responsibilities and tasks, in conjunction to those of the other officers.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:45 PM, with Jim passing the proverbial Chair’s gavel to Gerry Szymanski. A final round of applause was given to Rachel for hosting the meeting, and to Jim for his service as Chair.

Respectfully submitted,

Rick McRae  
Secretary/Treasurer  
New York State/Ontario Chapter  
Music Library Association