

MINUTES
Market Street Singers Board Meeting
August 9, 2010

President Susanne Redalje called the meeting to order at 7:02pm at the home of Elsie Simon.

PRESENT: Board Members: Marijke deVries, Susanne Redalje, Kate Riordan, Elsie Simon;

Artistic Director: Chris Vincent; **Visitors:** Chris Baptiste, Sarah Coyle, John Marshall.

ABSENT: Suzy Crawley, Kathryn Minturn.

COMMUNICATIONS: President Susanne Redalje called our attention to the need to improve communication among and between Board members, Director, and choir members. Within the Board, as more and more activities are going on concurrently, Susanne, as President, needs to be able to see the whole picture of what the organization is doing. To that end, we will copy her in on our MSS-related emails and update her on actions. We agreed to keep announcements at rehearsals concise, and preferably presented by Board Members and to identify board members by introducing them, and noting it on their nametags. Thanks to John Marshall, we now have a new Newsletter format which will help greatly in communicating with membership.

M/S/C (moved by Kate Riordan) to approve the Minutes of the July 12, 2010 Board Meeting.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Treasurer Kate Riordan reported July Income of \$1928, Expenses \$1991 for (\$62) balance for the month, and a year to date balance of \$1685. Income and Expenses were each higher because of an in-Kind donation of \$703.66 by Kate Riordan and Karl Haug of material, design and labor for risers.

The Treasurer's Report was accepted without objection.

DIRECTOR'S TOPICS:

MEMBERSHIP STANDARDS: Our Membership Standards are currently quite general. Chris Vincent pointed out that we need to better convey our expectations to newcomers: first, we want them to enjoy and contribute to the group. Then they need to: know or learn how to sing in harmony, sing in a choir, and follow a director. They need to: pick up the basics of reading music, listen to recordings, and freely come to the Director for help. We should put this on our website for prospects to read before they come into the group. We agreed to use Chris's wording, quoted at end.(1)

Currently, newcomers arrive and are given a set of music which they can take home after filling out a brief contact form. Sometimes they (and especially the music) do not return. From now on, we will give them a Visitor's Set of music for the rehearsal, retrieve it and send them home with contact form and membership guidelines. We will wait at least one week before issuing

them their own music. When it (rarely) happens that someone isn't a good fit for the choir, we need to deal with it as early as possible. We affirmed that Chris, as Artistic Director, has the experience and sole authority to make such judgement calls.

Sarah Coyle has volunteered to be the New Member Intake Director, and newcomers via the website will be routed to her email. In addition, Barbara Helde will help her with background, and they will work with Susanne and Chris. The fact that we now have a solid group of Section Leaders, with the addition of Marijke deVries, with Eden Rivers, Ron Bowles, and Suzy Crawley (pro tem) will greatly help with communication between the Board and choir members, and provide feedback to newcomers.

The proposed new standards should be ready for the September Board meeting, and ready to publish September 21. Sarah's new job will also include seasonal updating of the Membership Standards.

GREATER SEATTLE CHORAL CONSORTIUM has been formed by NW choirs to promote choral music by promoting each other. If we join the consortium (\$50/year) their website will include a profile of our group and we will be part of a master calendar of all members' concerts, which we will be obligated to distribute at our performances. We are welcome to send a representative to the their steering committee meetings, and it might be a good idea.

M/S/C That we join the Greater Seattle Choral Consortium at the \$50/year participation fee.

CONCERT PRODUCTION COSTS: Over the years we have wavered about how much to spend on programs and posters, or how many to order. We are concerned about the increasing costs of concerts, having netted only \$150 on the June 5 & 6 concert. We had overestimated program needs, having run out of programs for the 2009 Artwalk concert. Chris and Kate will discuss ways to reduce costs for the 2010 Artwalk concert which will include one sheet black and white programs, fewer flyers, 30ea 8.5" x 11" posters and perhaps volunteers folding the programs. Other options will be considered. Chris will confer with Russ about this.

RECOGNITION OF DONORS IN PROGRAM: We did this for the first time in the June 4-5 program, listing all donors since we began in 2004. We agreed that subsequent programs should acknowledge donors of the past year only.

CHRIS AND THE BOARD: Chris's new job precludes him from attending meetings on Monday night, and this is not good for the choir. We agreed to continue meeting on Monday nights for two months, then on Sunday night the third month when Chris could attend. In addition Susanne, as President, will review with Chris the minutes of the missed meetings and provide more detail. Chris also invites other board members to give him input anytime.

CHARITY CHOICE: For beneficiaries of donations to be collected at our ACT Christmas performances, the Board agreed to designate the Ballard NW Senior Center and the Ballard Food Bank as joint recipients this year.

FUNDRAISING OPPORTUNITY: Chris reported a fundraising opportunity by a group called InHome Spa, offering \$150 spa treatment in the home for \$20, of which MSS would keep \$14. Kate will look into it.

2011 BUDGET PREPARATION: This discussion was postponed until the next meeting, Meanwhile Board members can familiarize themselves with the current budget and monthly detail reports to prepare for constructive deliberations.

Susanne suggested we not give up on seeking grants, that the Public Library has resources to help non profits do this, and that we have some experienced grant writers in the choir.

CHRIS'S VISION: Chris wants the Board to share his vision(s): of establishing an annual youth choral composition contest, and of producing an international concert, telecast via the internet simultaneously with a group somewhere around the globe.

NEW BUSINESS: Kate reported that the Bylaws Update will be ready for next board meeting along with a draft of procedures.

Meeting Adjourned at 9:15PM.

Elsie Simon, Secretary

Addendum: Treats for Meetings: **September** = Kate; **October** = Kathryn

TO DO's:

Kate: speak to choir about donations at tomorrow's (Aug 10th) rehearsal

Susanne: introduce the Board members at rehearsal

Kate: investigate "Inhome Spa" fundraiser

?Kate/Susanne: ask Mike Anthis to look further into bus advertising

Sarah: work with Chris, Susanne and Barbara Helde to format Membership Standards, and prepare process for New Member Intake in the Fall

(1) Chris Vincent's suggested Membership Standards statement:

"The Market Street Singers is distinct among choirs in the Puget Sound area in that we encourage membership without an audition process. At the same time we aim for musical excellence and the creation of an environment that encourages friendship and enjoyment of each other's company. Many of our members have had experience singing in choirs, but that background is not required since everyone is expected to learn their music and grow as choral singers. We only expect that our members commit to our vision of being the best non-audition community choir in the area.

Making friends and enjoying our singing community is easy. We help with the rest, through comprehensive rehearsals, study recordings, occasional sectionals, and mentorship. Good rehearsal attendance fills in the rest."