

CSD Spring 2024 Board of Directors Meeting

Gateway Hotel, Ames, IA

Friday, April 19, 2024, 9 a.m.



Where the Harmony Began



President Matt Suellentrop opened the meeting at 9:00 a.m. with “The Old Songs” under the direction of Jeff Veteto. **A**

quorum was announced, with all ten of the board members present. District Past Presidents in attendance were recognized: Don Fuson, John Marshall, Chad Schuetz, and Duane Lawson. Guests, Perry White from Harmony Foundation and Tim Myers,



Society Board representative.

Self-Introductions: Jeff Arians, District Treasurer; Brett Randolph, District Executive Vice President; Duane Lawson, District Immediate Past President; Mike Shepherd, Kansas State Vice President; Perry White, Harmony Foundation; Dave Stephenson, South Dakota State Vice President; Greg Long, Des Moines Chapter President; Tim Myers, Society Board; Carter Combs, District Contest and Judging Vice President; Mike Bass, Missouri and Arkansas State Vice President; Chad Schuetz, District Chapter Support and Leadership Training Vice President; Doug Brott; District Events Vice President; Todd Johnson, District Marketing and Public Relations Vice President; Jeff Veteto, District Music and Performance Vice President; Don Fuson, District Membership Development Vice President; Larry Monson, District Chorus Director Development Vice President; Larry Hlavacek, Iowa State Vice President; Rick Pape, Nebraska State Vice President; ???; and Mark Fuerniss, District Secretary.

Treasurer’s Reports by CSD Treasurer Jeff Arians



As a reminder, the Board will vote on whether or not to “receive” the reports after they are presented and only board members are to vote. The Meeting will be conducted according to Robert’s Rules of Order for Small Boards, a second on motions is not required.

The **Financial Report** for spring 2024 includes 2023 Statement of Financial Position (formerly known as the Balance Sheet), 2023 Statement of Activities, 2023 Budget vs Actual, and 2024 HEP School & Leadership Academy Results.

2023 Statement of Financial Position: First section, “Current Assets”, shows cash, savings accounts, CDs. First few items under Assets reflect transferring assets from previous treasurer’s bank to Arian’s bank. Total Checking/Savings is down a bit because we lost money. Convention Funding Advances, \$1000 deposit to Prairie Meadows and \$2000 Wichita Orpheum, non-refundable, get off the balance sheet, money we lost due to the pandemic. Under Equity we have unrestricted and temporarily restricted funds. We no longer have a Harmony Nebraska Fund. Need to clean up the rest. Youth Chorus and Youth Quartet Fund money set aside to send youth quartets and choruses to NexGen contests. We have actually spent this money, but it hasn’t been recorded. We don’t have restricted funds set aside for regular quartets and choruses. Under Permanent Restricted Funds, will have to check with Warrick to see why Permanent Restricted Funds – Other is negative. There shouldn’t be anything in the Retained Earnings (net profit from prior years) account. Appears the reason there is money here is because equity hasn’t been adjusted since 2020. Need permission to allocate this money to where it should be.

Statement of Activities (formerly Profit and Loss) A two-year comparison was used. Numbers are pretty close to what they have been. "Gross Profit" should be "Total Income" or "Total Revenue" down just under \$4000 from 2022. Revenue seems to be going down slowly every year. Expenses were pretty normal. Judging Expenses went up a little bit, perhaps increase in travel costs. Everything pretty consistent. Purchasing microphones, Line 8260, a big expense we had in 2023 we didn't have in 2022. Travel for board went down significantly. Had to pay Wichita a large amount of money for (hotel) attrition. We have not had problems filling our hotel commitments in Lawrence. Trying to avoid food and beverage minimums and huge penalties on rooms in the future. 8400, we had some category school expenses as this is not an "every year" expense. Under Other income/Expense, our Harmony Foundation income (Line 4010, Endow Fund Contributions) went down. White explained the 2022 figure was prior to the settlement with the Barbershop Harmony Society. None of those funds were going to the national Barbershop Harmony Society, after that it has been exclusively Donor's Choice dollars coming back to the districts rather than a District Direct deposit.

Budget vs Actual. We budgeted to be in the black, but we weren't. We ended up in the red about \$9,200. Interest rates are higher, more money from CDs. Total income was budgeted at \$112,371 and we only got \$80,681, so we were way off. For Int'l Prelim Contest we budgeted about \$6,500 more than we actually received. WE should be able to budget this closer. Budgeted \$8,250 for Judging Expense (Line 7540) and actual expense was \$21,623. We were way off. Way over budget on Facility rent, parking & other (Line 8210) budgeted \$7,350 and spent \$14,373. Everything else is pretty consistent.

Statement of Activities. Activities we put on in 2024. Both HEP School and Leadership Academy were in the black. HEP School darn near broke even. Leadership Academy was in the black about \$349, technically \$100 too high. There was not \$100 in the rent section because that was actually in calendar year 2023. Really made around \$249 for Leadership Academy.

Arians asked permission to clean up the balance sheet to make it what it should be. Non-refundable deposits should not be carried forward as that money has been gone a couple years. Clean up the equity section for those journal entries that have not been made since 2020 and should have been made every year.

Michael Bass moved that we allow Jeff to make corrective actions as he sees appropriate. Motion passed unanimously with a voice vote.

Motion to receive the treasurer's report as presented, by Larry Hlavacek. No one was opposed. Motion passed.

Approval of Minutes and Consent Calendar, as posted on the CSD website. Suellentrop thanked contributors to the Consent Calendar. It was noted that District members who are not at our meetings rely on reports in the Consent Calendar to understand what we are doing. Fuson suggested attaching a counter to the Consent Calendar and inform chapter leaders that the Consent Calendar is available on the District web site. **Fuson moved to accept the minutes of the Fall 2024 Board minutes and Consent Calendar. No opposition so the Motion passed.** Fuson noted that all the districts should get an updated report from the Society CEO. (No dissension to Fuson's statement.)

Code of Regulations Revisions. Brett Randolph, Duane Lawson, Matt Suellentrop, Mark Erickson and Mark Fuerniss have been working on a revision of the CSD Code of Regulations. Randolph reported that it has been a few years since the Code has been amended and time to take a look at our Code to get things in line as to the way we are actually running things. We have suggested some broad changes to the code. We have met through a number of zoom calls. Our hope is to have something to bring to the Board and House of Delegates in the fall. [John Marshall pointed out that there should be someone monitoring the Code to be sure the District is functions as it should. The District Secretary should probably have this responsibility.] Myers pointed out that the Code should not have too many specificities in it. Put the specificities in a Policy Manual that can be updated regularly by the Board. Use the Code for guiding principles and definitions of roles and refer to policies. The Board has more control over the policies without having to go to the House of Delegates for approval. [Specificities in the Code makes it necessary to make changes in the code more often than you should]. Veteto: "The Code is more of what you would call guidelines than actual rules." [Capitan Barbossa](#).

Fuson, those code changes to be more board driven policy referencing have to be a HOD resolution to allow the board to move forward in that direction.

Events Report: Doug Brott

As of yesterday, we have 188 registrations; we had budgeted for around 400. Attendance at spring conventions has been declining. Very few choruses. That in conjunction with BHS rules changes, and our changes in accordance with plateaus now being determined by number of members on stage, and any chorus with a minimum score is eligible to go to International, so now small choruses can compete against large choruses as easily as anything else. Brott questioned why the spring convention was set up for "small" choruses to begin with. Because of the changes taking place Society wide and the decrease in attendance in our spring convention, the convention team has been discussing the possibility of doing all chorus competitions in the fall, and only have a quartet contest in the spring, at which time the only chorus that would have to be there would be a senior international qualifier. You should have received the proposal we wrote, invite all choruses to the fall convention, and quartet competitions, fall convention would not change. As a result, we would be getting more people at fall convention, be able to utilize the wonderful facilities we have through 2027 in Lawrence. Enables us to have quartet contests in spring and maybe one or two choruses so they could qualify. And then in conjunction, we could run the HEP School at the same time; have a festival, a brigade, a platoon, etc. We could do all of those things in a hotel without having a separate venue which is an added expense. Basic proposal is to combine quartet contest in the spring with HEP, utilizing judges as coaches for HEP school or any chorus or quartet that wants to come in. We could create a festival for anyone who wants to come in. More work and possibly money losing, but optimistically, getting more people interested in just coming in and singing together promoting both the spring and fall conventions. Perhaps have semis and finals on Friday, and have all day Saturday for coaching, HEP, etc. Suellentrop said changes would be an Events team decision. We would be changing the structure of the convention. Goal was to present the idea this weekend. Brott said he would like to begin "all chorus" competition this fall. Suellentrop said feedback from the House of Delegates this afternoon would be important. The Event's team can then mold these ideas into a more definitive plan. Fuson asked if this plan would get a greater overall chorus and quartet participation. [J. Marshall pointed out that our move to Ames was to be closer to some of the smaller chapters encouraging small chorus participation, which didn't happen.] Brott said we are looking at different ways to increase attendance for example, we changed registration structure to

encourage more families, offered chorus and quartet coaching opportunities. How do we get chapters to read information that is put out. Fuerniss noted that the current Code of Regulations states "The administrative management of all conventions will be the responsibility of the District Events V.P." (Paragraph 7.1), and later "All actions by the Convention Team are subject to approval by the Board of Directors." (paragraph 7.2.3).

10 a.m. break. Meeting resumed with "Honey Little 'Liz" under the direction of Larry Monson.



Suellentrop initiated a brief discussion on possibly updating the District logo. How long have we had our current logo? J.P. Marshall thought the current logo was redone to be digitally friendly about 29 years ago. Is it time for an update?

Program Administration Team Reports

Events. Suellentrop said we have dates through Fall 2027 for the Lied Center in Lawrence for fall conventions, have dates but don't have venues confirmed for spring conventions. Dates, listed on our [website, https://singcsd.com](https://singcsd.com). have been set through 2030.

Carter Combs, **Contest and Judging:** We have seven approved applicants for the new round of judging certification/candidate school. Need to plan this into our budget as the district covers their tuition. Candidate school is the end of July. Society C & J changed the minimum size of a chorus from 12 to 9, allowed us to make a modification of our Plateau I category, 9 – 19 on stage; left VLQ and Small chorus, 9 – 29 on stage, unchanged.

Todd Johnson, **Marketing and Public Relations:** With Sandi Wright, developed a presentation that Schuetz presented at Leadership Academy. Developed and distributed press releases for this convention/contest and responded to media inquiries. Donell Torres has been updating our website with fresh content. Executed targeted mail to encourage attendance for this weekend. Revitalization of the *Serenade* magazine with Michael Pommier and Rick Ziegler; working on setting up a schedule set for articles. Communication challenge, identifying the barrier for people getting information; reaching out to chapters to see how they view communication. What's too much, what's too little; if they're getting any at all. Feel good about the *Serenade* coming back. Reaching out to quartets and choruses for ad placement. Plan to send out a monthly newsletter, a concise, bullet-point announcement about what's going on in the District. Perhaps include links to District Facebook and website. Keep information concise and direct to our membership. [John posed the question of what can Todd do to make sure important information attractive enough so that the information gets read.] Randolph asked what district leadership can do to help support Marketing and Public Relation. Johnson expressed appreciation of the support he has been given. Johnson: "It's going to be exciting and fun."



Chad Schuetz. **Chapter Support and Leadership Training.** A survey revealed that Leadership Academy participants want more singing opportunities so more singing opportunities will be added to Leadership Academy as well as more opportunities for director education. Leadership Academy was not well attended, moved from its original date, registration wasn't set up correctly the first time. District champs **First Class** happened to be there, really cool. Looking to revamp Leadership Academy to increase opportunities for our members. Randolph



asked what the District leadership team can do to support Chapter Support and Leadership Training. Schuetz responded that the marketing of District events has to be better. Consistency of messaging is important.

Carter Combs was asked the same question, how can the District leadership team support you better? Combs answered the team has been awesome this year.

Jeff Veteto, **Music and Performance**: The February HEP school was a complete success, There were three choruses, one women's and two men's, two women's quartets, eight men's quartets, one VLQ, with eight or nine top-notch coaches. Had about 80 total participants. Broke even or even made a dollar or two. Finally convinced the leadership team that HEP School is an investment.

Don Fuson, **Membership Development**: The people that don't attend Leadership Academy ask the same 80% of the questions. Tools are coming down from Nashville are there, but members don't know how to use them. For example, how often do chapter boards download and review their chapter roster? Correct answer is "Every month." Often, new chapter leaders don't know how to get a chapter roster, and therefore can't help their chapter members. Ask your chapter secretary if they know how to download a chapter roster. As a district leader you have access to District downloads. District reports can be used to obtain contact information on all registered quartets in the district. Use District downloads to support chapters. Chapter president, secretary, treasurer and membership v. p. can access chapter files. Make sure chapter leaders are aware of their job descriptions. Old chapter job descriptions are in the Society Policy Manual, 2012. Singing organization that has members or member organization that also sings. Don appreciates reports he gets on individual chapters. Chapters like to see their name mentioned in Consent Calendar. How can we be more present to those chapter leaders.

F.A.I.L. First Attempt In Learning

Larry Monson **Chorus Director Development** Thanked the board for budgeting monies for Chorus Director Development for directors to attend Harmony U. How to measure the follow-through in their rehearsal techniques, how effective are they? Have kept in contact with them, encourage them to attend our Leadership Academy. Developing this program with trust and patience. Very difficult for chapters to understand their directors need to have continuing education. They bring in coaches for the chorus, but not for the director. Keep mentoring, encouraging our directors. Could use more money to travel to visit chapters.

[11:00 o'clock on the dot. So . . .]

(State Vice President Reports:

Nebraska, Rick Pape Nebraska is doing ok. Number 1 goal is to get more participation at the fall convention. Fremont, Lincoln, Beatrice are typically the only ones that show up. Need to visit with other chapter directors and boards to see why they are not coming to fall convention, what we need to do to help them get to Lawrence. Another goal is to get all Nebraska chapters visible on social media.

Iowa Larry Hlavacek Goal is to learn more about chapters and choruses in Iowa. Reach out to them and see if there is something I can help them with. Put video together for Des Moines chapter (Harmony Delegation) about the convention. Sent out a survey for his Consent Calendar report. Five of eleven chapters responded.



Kansas Mike Shepherd A couple chapters in Kansas are having some issues. Asking them what the district can do to help them. Wants to personally visit every chapter at least once if not twice during the year. “It’s just been forever since anybody from the District has come out to see us.” Try to get to chapter shows and open up a line of communication with them.



Missouri/Arkansas Michael Bass, A lot of success with some of the chapters in Missouri. On the good side of content vs complacent. Goal, try to make the district relevant to our chapters year-round.

South Dakota, Dave Stephenson. Five chapters in South Dakota. Other than the Viborg Chapter, the four chapters are struggling. Able to visit with members from Watertown, Mitchell, and Sioux Falls at the Viborg chapter show. Plans to do a better job getting out to visit chapters. Watertown plans to do a show next year. Mitchell is struggling but they are hanging in there, have gained a few new members. Have to figure how to help struggling chapters.

Fuson noted that we have about fifteen or so chapters with less than 10 members and posed the question as to what we should be doing with these chapters. Is there a process in place to deal with these chapters? Fuson suggested sending the chapter a letter requesting their charter with a reply that the chapter board has elected to disband. If the Society closes a chapter, the District should be made aware of this. Important to know which ones we are working with that want to improve.

Bass made a motion to adjourn. With no opposition, meeting adjourned 11:12 am.

Marshall directed “Keep the Whole World Singing”.



Mark Fuerniss, Secretary
Central States District

