

CSD Fall 2025 Board of Directors Meeting

DoubleTree Hotel, Lawrence, KS

Thursday October 9, 2025, 7 p.m.



Where the Harmony Began



President Randolph opened the meeting at 7 p.m. with “The Old Songs”. Robert’s Rules of Order for Small Boards will be used for the Board of Directors meeting. A quorum was announced.



Past District Presidents in attendance were recognized: Harvey Kiser, Chad Schuetz, Duane Lawson, Don Fuson, Matt Suellentrop, and John Marshall. Self-introduction of Board Members* and guests in attendance: Larry Warrick; Carter Combs, Contest and Judging V.P.; Tim Link, Chapter Support and Leadership Training V.P.; Doug Brott, Events V.P.; Allan Mebus, Iowa City Chapter President; Greg Long, Des Moines Chapter President; Larry Hlavacek*, Iowa State V.P.; Mike Shepherd*, Kansas State V.P.; Stephen True*, Missouri/Arkansas State V.P.; Jeff Wolff, BHS Board Member; Matt Suellentrop*, Immediate Past President; Jeff Arians*, bearer of bad news also known as District Treasurer; Dan Bodtke*, Executive Vice President; Mark Fuerniss*, District Secretary; Rick Pape*, Nebraska State V.P.; Jim Clark, Director of Development for International Harmony Foundation.

Kansas V.P., Mike Shepherd **moved to approve the Agenda for the Board meeting**. Without objection, the **Agenda was approved**. Randolph reminded those in attendance that only Board Members may make and vote on motions.

Financial Reports, Jeff Arians, CSD Treasurer, posted on [CSD Website](https://singcsd.com/convention-documents/) under ADMIN, <https://singcsd.com/convention-documents/>.



Statement of Financial Position. (Balance Sheet) Snapshot of our assets and equity as we have no liabilities. Our total cash and liquid assets has decreased just over \$20,000 from this time last year. A lot of that was due to the Spring Convention. As of August 31, 2025, our liquid cash is now about \$58,618. Good news is our fall registration income is over our current budget. Hopefully we can continue to stay on the top side of our revenue budgets.

Statement of Activities, (Profit and Loss) Left column of the report is January – August, 2025, middle column is January – August, 2024, right column is the change. Income of just over \$14,000 in Spring Convention registrations this year compared to just under \$12,000 last year. Timing issue as we didn’t pull from our Pay Pal account yet for the fall convention. (Last year we pulled \$7,000 out to meet some bills.) Everything else is very consistent on the revenue side. Total Income through August is just under \$42,000, \$41,854, rounded. Last year,

\$44,000. Expense side is somewhat consistent. Total Expenses are just over \$52,000; last year just over \$53,000. Other Income section, where we record Harmony International Foundation is down a little bit. The Other Expenses, money spent for travel subsidies for choruses and quartets qualifying for International and Mid-Winter contests is up this year, meaning we had more groups qualifying for International or Mid-Winter. Bottom line, we are a little bit worse off than last year mainly because of the travel subsidies. We're at an almost \$22,000 loss through August of this year. Last year, just over \$15,000.

Statement of Activities by Class A breakdown of Iowa Harmony Clinic in the left column of the report, Spring Convention in the middle column, and Total in the right column. The Iowa Harmony Clinic brought in \$1,280. However, we ended up on the hole as expenses were about \$3,000, a large portion of which was for church rental. With better planning we might find something cheaper in South Dakota. The middle column is figures for the Spring Convention. We had more registrations than the year before but our costs at the Kansas City Airport Hilton Hotel were a little bit higher; we had to build a stage, etc. Bottom line, ended up losing \$19,673 for Spring 2025 Convention. Together these two events is the majority of our loss this year which hopefully we can eat into a little bit with our fall registration being over budget and hopefully keeping our expenses below budget and show a profit for the first time

Motion to accept the financial report made by Larry Hlavacek. With no objections, **financial reports were accepted as presented.**

Proposed Budgets are in the Financial Reports posted on the [CSD website](#).

The Board reviewed the Proposed Budget during a Zoom meeting on September 28, 2025. Arians, Randolph, and Boddke have spent considerable time trying to get budget closer to actual revenue and actual expenses, post pandemic. Registrations have been inflated in previous budgets using pre-pandemic figures. Pre-pandemic, income was \$106,000 – 108,000/year; post pandemic, income has been in the mid \$80,000. The majority of this budget is a three-year average to get a more realistic budget as opposed to a hopeful budget. We've lost significant amounts of money the past few years. We're not selling as many registrations, people aren't attending conventions as often.

2026 Preliminary Budget We're budgeting for about \$85,000 in income. The expenses are three-year averages. Without any significant changes in our spending habits, the Preliminary Budget shows about a \$20,000 loss for 2026. We either have to cut expenses or bring in more revenue. We need to look at expenses and reduce them as much as we can. The board and financial committee have discussed some cuts to expenses.

2026 Budget With Additional Cuts. Everything is the same, with a few highlighted spots.

- Line 8225, Food and Beverage Minimums, Reduced to \$7,500, although at this time, we don't have a venue lined up for the spring.

- Line 8320, Travel – BOD & PAT, with virtual spring Board and House of Delegates meetings, we will not have to reimburse any Board members for travel to the convention. Quite of few districts are doing virtual board meetings to save money. Bodtke added, hopefully House of Delegates meetings via Zoom will expand our outreach and encourage greater participation.
- Lines 8321 and 8331, travel subsidies for choruses and quartets. With International Convention being in St. Louis and a lot of our International competing groups being in St. Louis, we cut travel subsidies to International in half. Choruses were receiving \$1000, now receiving \$500; quartets will receive \$250 instead of \$500. These cuts apply just to International, not Mid-Winter.

Since 2026 is a once-every-three-year “category school” year, we have a budget line expense (Line 8410) of \$8,400, \$600/(candidate or judge). (Combs: we have 13 certified judges and 4 candidates. Arians: If there are 17 judges/candidates, the \$8,400 figure will have to be increased. Or, for 16 judges/candidates @ \$525/(judge/candidate) is \$8400.

With these changes, the budget has a bottom line loss of \$10,645. Randolph: We want to do everything we can to be fiscally responsible yet workable for our members. Bodtke: if the Spring Convention continues to be the problem with the budget, we may have to consider not having a Spring Convention in the future if we can’t find a sustainable model. Find less expensive venues. Arians: We’re trying not to raise dues or convention registrations. The **2026 Budget With Additional Cuts** will be presented to the House of Delegates.

Three biggest expense areas for conventions are judges, venue, and then reimbursements for leaders. Virtual Board and House of Delegates meetings in the spring would save reimbursement expenses for Board and PAT members. Convention team will have to be there. Last spring, reimbursements for Board and PAT members was about \$7,600; judging expenses was about \$12,300. Registration income was about \$14,000. A double panel of judges is required for international preliminary contests. There are a lot of factors in play that require us to have a certain number of judges. We have been trying to centralize conventions to maximize attendance. Events team is looking at various venues in an attempt to keep expenses down.

Don Fuson, What are “best practices” across the districts? A convention planner may be able to help us reduce some costs. Based on projected attendance, can they negotiate a venue. Response, CSD has been working with a convention planner since 2018. (Donna Tyree, see Event V.P.’s report in July 20, 2025 Board Minutes.) Brott asked if other districts are able to generate income from sponsors? Clark: not to his knowledge. Does not know of any districts actively pursuing sponsorships. Bodtke: Southwestern District has sponsors for their Livestream. What can we offer sponsors? Clark: The host chapter would produce the convention program and the chapter members soliciting ads from local businesses (What a novel idea!!) The webcast sponsorship is very specific. Brott: how can we work with BHS to promote our Livestream around the world. Clark: Don’t need BHS for livestreaming, all you

need is the network. Regarding copyright issues, Bodtke stated “For the livestream we’re good there because of the BHS copyright. That’s the same copyright BHS uses for their International performances that they post on YouTube.”

New Business,

Spring and Summer Board Minutes. Spring 2025 Board Minutes, Spring 2025 House of Delegates Minutes, Summer 2025 Board Minutes and the Fall 2025 Consent Calendar have been posted on the CSD website <https://www.singcsd.com> in the ADMIN section, [Convention Documents](#).

Motion to approve Spring 2025 Board minutes, the Summer 2025 Board Minutes and the Consent Calendar made by Hlavacek. Without objection the minutes and the Consent Calendar were approved.

BHS Update, Society Board Member Jeff Wolff. Filling the role of the BHS Ambassador to the



District, to be a presence at the Convention, to answer questions about what is going on at the Society level. As a brief overview of what is going on at the BHS Board level, a new CEO starts August 18, 2025. **Robert Rund**, a 50-year BHS member, with a wealth of knowledge about non-profit organizations and fund raising. For the last few years, there has



been a reduction of staff at Harmony Hall. And with membership on the uptick, and conventions coming back, sold out at international this year, this year BHS total revenue is ahead of budget of \$437,000. Net income is \$129,000 over last year.

- Mid-winter was strongly attended. 1,491 attendees an increase of 23 attendees from last year; an increase of 211 non-youth attendees. Exceeded budget by \$36,000.
- Harmony-U, not so great, 288 attendees, down 137. Think it was a one time deal due to multiple events in Denver.
- International had 5,664 attendees, an increase of 107 from 2024 in Cleveland, and was the highest attended International Convention since Nashville in 2016.

The **Harmony Hall building** is for sale. The main value is its location. The sale will be a financial windfall.

The BHS Board came up with a statement for “[Acceptable Taste](#)”, available on the Society Web site (<https://www.barbershop.org/acceptable-taste>). Every single word of the statement examined and discussed. The statement is out there, what does it actually mean? how does it translate in the real world? The statement is an evolution in the process, a growth opportunity.

Regarding district conventions: The BHS Board is a policy setting and governance organization, Harmony Hall takes care of operations. The Board and BHS knows that spring

conventions are problematic Society-wide, not specific to CSD. Districts are trying to decide whether to have district conventions anymore. Some have come to BHS asking for help. Perhaps have regional competitions or districts banding together instead of everyone having their own. The **Un-Convention**, designed as a trial program, giving quartets another opportunity to try to qualify for International. The Un-Convention provided an opportunity for districts that didn't host their own convention. It provided another outlet they could use to send their quartets to. Randolph asked if there has been conversation of BHS taking on or sharing more the judging expenses, lessening the expenses on the district side. Wolff said this is something the BHS Board could talk about. Fuson invited Wolff to thank the CFO/COO and Society President for providing a report in the Consent Calendar.

Harmony Foundation International representative Jim Clark, As a former CSD



member, 1993 - 1999, it's wonderful to be back in the Central States. The six members on the HFI staff have around 170 years of BHS membership. How CSD member donations to



HFI can help the District? HFI wants to help the District. How can you help us help you? What are ways you can inspire more Central States members to consider giving to the Foundation and giving back to the District. Some specifics of the decrease in HFI money coming back to the district: memberships are down since the pandemic, philanthropy is down across the world after a spike in 2021, more people are redirecting their dollars locally, people are angling their donors choice to chapters or stopping their giving altogether, we lost a lot of members during the pandemic, they aged out, can't give like they used to. In addition to supporting Next Generation barbershop and Harmony University programs, HFI supports the [Power of Harmony](#) and [AIC Outreach](#) programs. Power of Harmony costs about \$70,000/year per facility. Does not include administrative costs. We have four facilities. HFI funds ten AIC outreach activities per year. After the circus leaves town, it's the chapter's responsibility to follow up with local schools and music educators. Is receiving a AIC grant dependent on the financial stability of a chapter? Dennis Castiglione and the grants committee evaluates the chapter's business plan regarding the AIC event.

Nominating Committee Report, Matt Suellentrop, as Immediate Past President, is the chair of the nominating committee. State Vice Presidents are elected by their respective states. Election of Kansas and Iowa State V.P.s were held. Kansas V.P. Mike Shepherd is eligible for a second two-year term as Kansas State V.P. The chapters in Kansas voted Mike Shepherd in for second two-year term. Larry Hlavacek is finishing his second term as Iowa State V.P.



The chapters in Iowa have elected Allan Mebus from Iowa City as the Iowa State V.P. The House of Delegates will be voting on District Secretary and District Treasurer at the House of Delegates meeting tomorrow.

Program Administration Team (PAT) reports and update on District Goals for 2025.

EVP Bodtke: Gave a brief synopsis of PAT activities relating to five goals set and assigned to Program Administration Team members.



Membership Development. Don Fuson, Membership Development V.P.. Goal was to focus on recruitment and retainment efforts. Fuson put together Zoom meetings to get feedback from chapters of ways we can help them. Assistance from State V.P. to get a status update from chapters to send to Membership V.P. would be helpful in these endeavors to get a better pulse on these groups. Fuson will continue to work on that effort to try to get more folks in the door and get out chapters back up to where they were pre-pandemic and continue to grow.

Marketing. Chad Schuetz, Marketing and Public Relations V.P.. Goal was to determine what contact we can have with each chapter to keep them updated on what the district is doing and keep us updated as to what the chapters are doing. We want to be able to market that for them. Schuetz has been trying to find ways to best contact chapters. Chapter Presidents aren't always the best contact. Looking for more of a marketing individual. Find a person that is more plugged in. We hope to develop a marketing community throughout the District, to have a central place to report and market their awesome activities. Schuetz will work on ways to connect us all and better support each other with marketing. We've had good success with our Facebook and social media interactions over the last six/seven months. The Marketing team is posting almost every day. 30,000 views over the last 28 days on the CSD Facebook page. <https://www.facebook.com/CentralStatesDistrict/>. The *Serenade* has been coming out every two months pretty regular for the last year. The *Serenade* is another place where chapters can share their accomplishments. Send accomplishments to marketing@singcsd.com. Schuetz asked for input from chapters to identify a chapter contact so that a repository of chapter contacts could be created in Slack.



Music and Performance and Chorus Directing Development, Duane Lawson, Music and Performance V.P. and interim Chorus Director Development V.P.. Goal was to find a good way to share a list of available coaches for the district. Lawson and Combs are the keepers of the list of coaches. Chapters should contact Lawson or Combs if they are interested in obtaining a coach. Resources are available for acquiring learning tracks. We will be putting some URLs for learning tracks on our website soon. Lawson set up an **Iowa Harmony Clinic** earlier this year which included some chorus director coaching. Six quartets were there for coaching, two directors worked with *Vox Infinitus*. Coaching panel consisted of Darin Drown, Rick Knight, and Rik Johnson. We're planning to do other local events. Planning one this coming year in South Dakota, similar to the Iowa Harmony Clinic with coaching for quartets and choruses. We will not have a HEP school next year but focus on the Spring Convention for quartet coaching. Lawson is planning to have a booth at the



Missouri Music Educators Association conference to reach out to our local music educators in Missouri and in the following years, if successful, look at these opportunities in other states to spread barbershop to educators and keep them updated on what barbershop has to offer. Lawson has reached out to BHS for resources and materials to help with the booth. Nebraska State V.P. Pape added that Logan Langholdt of the Lincoln, NE Chapter and his wife presented a session, “Barbershop 101”, at the [Nebraska Music Educators Association](#) meeting last fall, and plans to present “Barbershop 102” this fall. It was announced that J.P. Marshall will be taking over the Chorus Director Development program.

Events, Doug Brott, Events V.P.. We have a record-breaking 37 quartets and 18 choruses at this convention. We’re going in the right direction with the choices we’re making. 686 attendees, up 50 from last spring, does not include walk-ups and complimentary registrations for invited Northwest High School youth chorus from Wichita. Events team is heavily scrutinizing choices we’re making for spring convention; looking at area schools, and anything thrown our way to see what type of opportunities there are to save money as well as to improve the convention experience. Send ideas of locations, central to the district, to Events V.P. Brott, events@singcsd.com. We’re trying to reach out to more local groups, high schools, colleges, to see if they would like to appear at our conventions to get engagement in the communities we’re interacting with. We’re offering International Preliminary contest for quartets at the fall convention for the first time. State V.P.’s have been working hard to get engagement with their groups. We’re getting choruses that we haven’t seen in a while. Randolph added that all District awards are now given in the fall for various reasons. Brott pointed out that we have a little over \$5,000 in grants for the fall convention from the city of Lawrence.



Contest and Judging, Carter Combs, Contest and Judging V.P.. Qualification changes from BHS, for automatic qualifying score for International quartet is now 81. There is a sing-in opportunity for quartets scoring 78 – 80. The top two scoring quartets will be added to International quartet quarter final contest.



Chapter Support and Leadership Training, Tim Link, Chapter Support and Leadership Training V.P.. January 10, 2026 is the date of the Leadership Academy, in Shawnee, KS. Registration and schedule is posted on the [CSD Website](#) under the EDUCATION tab. Usual leadership classes for chapter president, chapter secretary and chapter treasurer as well as opportunities for other classes. Succession plans for chapters has been brought up. How can we help chapters develop succession plans?



Digitization updates

Suellentrop started digitizing our old VHS tapes during the pandemic. More items have been brought to his attention. There is a line item in the budget of \$1,500 towards getting rest of the items digitized. Eddie Holt of BHS Marketing arranged for BHS to digitize everything for us,

including what we have already done, post production work, audio and video touch-ups, etc., at no cost to us. In exchange, BHS would have access to these tapes. The BHS offer does not apply to the history boards. The YouTube link is available on messages sent out by CSD Marketing team. ([Central States District - YouTube, https://www.youtube.com/@centralstatesdistrict7705/featured](https://www.youtube.com/@centralstatesdistrict7705/featured))

Motion was made to allow BHS to digitize our archived video files for us. With no objections, the motion passed.

District Focus areas for 2026. A planning retreat is scheduled for January 11, 2026. To save expenses, the retreat may be conducted in a hybrid fashion for those not attending Leadership Academy.

- Bodtke: Explore sponsorship ideas. Is there interest? What can we offer for sponsorship.
- True: Investigate ways to connect chapters to higher educational institutions. Getting more engagement with higher education institutions.
 - The current director of the Lincoln Chapter chorus has maintained his relationship with his university barbershop group, a few of whom have become BHS members and are singing in a chorus and quartets.
 - The 4:3 quartet, competing as a novice quartet this weekend under the Frank Thorne Chapter, is composed of STEM students from the University of Nebraska – Omaha.
 - A lot of the Columbia, MO chapter members are college students.
 - HFI grants are not restricted to chapters or districts. Applications from college/university groups as well as high school and junior high school groups, even retirement homes, would be considered.
 - There has been barbershop engagement with local MEAs.

Randolph thanked those in attendance for their time and dedication to the District and barbershop.

Motion made by Randolph to adjourn the meeting. With no objection, the meeting was adjourned.



Meeting recorded by Mark Fuerniss, CSD Secretary