

Manitoba Choral Association Inc. Annual General Meeting

Saturday, June 11, 11:00 am
Hybrid Meeting: 600 Shaftesbury Blvd./Zoom

Draft Minutes

Present: Stuart Sladden (Chair), Valdine Anderson (Pembina Trails Voices), Avonlea Armstrong-Green, Janet Brenneman, Maureen Britton, Jorrel Camuyong, Carole Carlson (non-voting), Dorothy Dyck (non-voting), Henry Engbrecht (Honorary Member), Maureen Ferley (Bernie Wolfe School), Klaus Froese, Nancy Gomes Fast, Johanna Hildebrand, Adam Kilfoyle, Joanne Kilfoyle, Ron Krug (Honorary Member), Michael Kurek (non-voting), Kim Lapatha, (non-voting), Philip Lapatha (Maples Collegiate), Sharon Marshall, Anita Munn (non-voting), Kathleen Murphy (staff), Marilyn Redekop (Honorary Member), Naomi Russell, David Sawatzky, Jenny-Lynn Sheldon, Jenny Steinke-Magnus, (staff), Larry Strachan (non-voting), Jenica Sul (staff), Sonya Williams, singers from Maple Sugar, singers from Ecco Singers, Brittany Mielnichuk (staff, recording)

Zoom: Elizabeth Gebauer (das Femmes), Carolyn Gwyer, Rosemary Komadowski (Assiniboine Chorus), Catherine Robbins, Elaine Thomson (Strathclair Theatre Chorus)

1. Welcome

The meeting was called to order at 11:03am. Stuart did a land acknowledgement and introduced Maple Sugar from Maples Collegiate (Winnipeg), directed by Dorothy Dyck and Philip Lapatha.

Maple Sugar performed 3 songs.

2. Adoption of Agenda (Attachment 1)

MOTION 1: That the agenda be adopted.

M/S: Naomi Russell/Ron Krug. CARRIED.

3. Minutes of 2021 Annual General Meeting (Attachment 2)

MOTION 2: That the minutes from the 2021 AGM be approved as presented.

M/S: Adam Kilfoyle/David Sawatzky. CARRIED.

4. Board of Directors Reports (Attachment 3)

Stuart summarized activities since the last AGM as outlined in the attached board reports. He reviewed some of the highlights:

MCA Virtual Projects

MCA put out two virtual projects this year. The first was our Virtual Holiday Sing-Along Concert, released in December. This saw participation from 8 different choirs from across the province in the sing-along portion and included 5 feature choir performances. The second project was the MCA Virtual Choir, released on Music Monday. This year, the virtual choir featured a piece by Canadian composer Sarah Quartel and was guest conducted by Dr. Jamie Hillman. We had over 100 singers from across the province participate.

New MCA Staff

Stuart recognized and welcomed new MCA office staff Brittany Mielnichuk (Program and Resource Coordinator), Kathleen Murphy, and Jenica Sul (Summer Digital Resource Assistants)

Membership

Membership numbers across the board are up over last year's numbers, though still lower than pre-pandemic numbers. We hope to see numbers return to higher levels with a return to in-person singing next season. There are no major changes to our membership structure for next year besides a slight fee increase.

PD

TEMPO was held virtually again last year and for the choral sessions MCA welcomed Dinah Helgeson, Kerry Marsh, and Catherine Glaser-Climie as the clinicians. Each of the sessions were recorded and made available to MMEA participants for a month following the event.

MCA held a Kodály Workshop in April 2022, with workshop leader Cathy Horbas presenting "Let's Sing! Strategies for Singing in Our Music Classrooms." It was very well attended, and MCA looks forward to continuing to work with the Kodály Society of Canada moving forward.

IDEA

Two IDEA Corner sessions were run this year: The first was an article discussion, which centered on inclusion in the choral arts, and the second was a discussion on Choir as a Gender-affirming Space, featuring speakers Roan Regan and Caleb Rondeau. These sessions provided a space for thought-provoking and meaningful discussions.

Gratitude, a song by traditional Anishinaabe drummer and singer Cory Campbell, will be published to the MCA website soon. This song says "thank you" in the languages of the traditional peoples of Manitoba and is a result of a University of Manitoba Creative Words Grant commission for the U of M Concert Choir.

Westman Region

The Westman Youth Choir was active this past fall under the direction of Michelle Chzyk. While not a normal year for the choir, they were able to produce a video project and invited alumni to join as well. The WMYC committee is now preparing for the 2022 iteration of the choir, to be directed by Sarah Hall and Philip Lapatha. In the region several choirs were able to return to in-person rehearsing and performing, including Brandon University Choirs, Women in Harmony, das Femmes, Konektis, Brandon Conservatory Chorale, and the Neelin High School choirs.

Central Region

CMYC 2021, under the direction of Marla Fontaine, had another modified year. They performed a concert at the Carmen Agricultural Fair Grounds, which was recorded and posted to YouTube. CMCA hosted a virtual festival in February called Snowcase, which provided unit plans and resources to educators for remote music teaching as well as provided an opportunity for sharing via the CMCA YouTube channel. Moving forward, CMCA is in the process of planning a more regular year for CMYC, which will be conducted by Kendra Obach. They are also planning a return of their School Choral Workshops, which are tentatively planned for October 13 in Morden.

Eastman Region

This past spring saw a return of EMCA's annual Easter Sunrise service on April 17. This event included the Winnipeg Brass Quintet, the Blumenort School Choir and other local singers and performers. This spring, EMYC also took the initiative to pull together a spring concert. They gathered for a week of singing in May, which culminated in a "Concert in the Park" in Steinbach on May 24. Plans are underway for a return to a more normal EMYC event this fall.

Interlake Region

Two events were highlighted in this region. The Quarry Choristers held their series of dinner theatre evenings this past year and the Interlake Choral Association held a public choir day and a youth choir day.

MOTION 3: That all reports be accepted as presented.

M/S: Marilyn Redekop/Sonya Williams. CARRIED.

5. Interim Financial Statements to May 31, 2022 (Attachment 4)

Adam presented MCA's financial position as of May 31, 2022. We are set to end this year with a small surplus (around \$4,000-5,000) and are deciding what to do with it. Highlights from the financial update include:

Grants

- We've received/are applying for several grants this year and are waiting to hear back on a few, but they would be applied to next year's budget

Donations

- We are currently at \$8,000 of our \$15,000 budget goal for this year

- We are taking part in the Great Canadian Giving Challenge this month as well as asking for donations as part of our music giveaway, so we hope to increase this number

Staff

- We have had Brittany working part-time this year and have hired 2 summer staff under the Canada Summer Jobs grant

National Youth Choir/PODIUM

- PODIUM expenses for Jenny have been expensed now, and we are just waiting to expense NYCC costs
- We had 6 Manitobans go to NYCC this year instead of 4, and thanks to grants from MB Arts Council and FCMM, and funds from the MCA Singers Helping Singers fund, we have enough to cover full tuition

The members applauded Jenny's work on receiving so many grants and were encouraged to make donations this month as part of the Great Canadian Giving Challenge.

6. Appointment of Auditors for 2021/2022 Fiscal Year

Since the last AGM, our auditors at The Exchange Group have informed us that they would be increasing our audit fee by \$1,500 next year (an approximate increase of 30%). We are in the process of soliciting quotes from other firms to bring the cost down. We would like to do this over the summer before our 2022 year-end. Since the membership normally approves our auditors, we are asking the membership to authorize the MCA board to choose new auditors based on the quotes we receive this summer.

MOTION 4: That the membership give the board authority to appoint new auditors for the 2021-22 fiscal year.

M/S: Adam Kilfoyle/Sharon Marshall. CARRIED.

7. Plans for 2022-23 – Program Slate, Budget (Attachments 5a & 5b)

Stuart presented the approved program slate for next year. Our plan is to move back to offering in-person events, adding virtual capacity wherever possible. The membership thanked MCA for the innovative program offerings focusing on IDEA topics.

Adam and Jenny presented the approved 2022-23 budget for information and highlighted:

- Next year's budget is quite a bit higher due to a hopeful increase in staff numbers, a return to in-person/hybrid programming and new/expanded programming (Outdoor Choral Festival, Symposium, expanded ChoralFest)
- We are hoping to focus on fund development work next year. We have hired a fundraising professional who will work with us at a board retreat later this summer to develop a plan for MCA to diversify revenues and approach fundraising in a sustainable way
- Next year we hope to add a third part-time employee (dependent on funding)

8. Updated Board Structure (Attachment 6)

Stuart presented the updated board structure as approved by the board. In August 2021, following a board retreat, a Governance Committee was struck to review discussions from the retreat, as well as other board models, and propose a new board structure for MCA. The board had extensive discussions and a Town Hall for the membership was held to solicit feedback. We are excited with the potential of this new structure, and we believe it will move MCA forward in a positive and genuine way, ready to respond to the needs of our choral community, while still maintaining flexibility and authenticity.

The membership voiced approval for the new structure and asked for clarification on how we can ensure regional representation on the MCA board. Stuart, Catherine, and David outlined that part of the intention behind removing the regional reps off the MCA board was to free up their time to do work in their own regions more efficiently and encourage more intentional collaboration between all regions. They reminded the membership that the Intra-Provincial Special Interest Group will meet 3-4 times a year and will coordinate with other MCA portfolios and staff (especially the nominating committee, outreach, and advocacy) to purposefully address inclusion and populate our board, committees, and special interest groups with representation from regions outside of Winnipeg.

Stuart and the membership thanked the Governance Committee for their work on this project.

9. Updated By-Laws (Attachment 7)

Jenny presented the updated by-laws reflecting the updated board structure. Jenny spent several months working with lawyers from Wolseley Law to substantially rewrite MCA's bylaws. She highlighted several key changes:

- We added a "Definitions" section.
- Some clauses from other sections have been moved to new sections in the new by-laws (ex. Article 2.5 on page 3 "Rules of Governance" and "Signing Authority").
- There is a new clause in 2.8 (also page 3) which allows the Board to approve periodic amendments to the By-laws, pending confirmation by the Membership at the next Membership Meeting. This allows the Board to make changes to the By-laws without needing to wait for an Annual General Meeting or Special Meeting of the Members.
- Charitable Purposes of the Association (Article 3, page 4): We aren't able to update these to better reflect our current strategic direction, as any changes as recorded in the by-laws must be pre-approved by the CRA before being implemented, otherwise there is a risk of our charitable status being suspended pending review. We will investigate updating these before the next AGM.
- Page 5, Article 4.4 Classes of Members – simplified considerably

- We added means of participation for both Board and Membership Meetings (Items 4.12, 5.14 – pages 6 and 9). This means that it is now in the by-laws that members and directors may participate in meetings via telephone or electronic means.
- On page 7 (Item 5.3) the number of Director positions has been considerably reduced. Our lawyers pointed out that we are now in fact in line with our Articles of Incorporation, which provides for a range of one to thirteen directors. So having eighteen directors as in our old model meant we have not been in compliance with Articles for awhile now!
- Clause 5.5 (page 8) now clarifies the term and succession of the Vice-President, President, and Past President, and confirms that individuals who fill those roles may run for election to a different position in the immediately succeeding term if they so wish.
- We have somewhat simplified Article 6 – duties & responsibilities.
- Article 7, Portfolios (page 12), is new. Note that it only mentions portfolios that will be standing/ongoing. We do have more portfolios than what is listed, but we want to make sure that the board can add or change them as determined by the needs of the organization.
- Committees section (page 13) has been simplified quite a bit, and again, this section doesn't mention every committee. Special Interest Groups have also been added.

MOTION 5: That the updated by-laws be accepted as presented.

M/S: David Sawatzky/Janet Brenneman. CARRIED.

10. Election of Directors

Stuart thanked outgoing board members and Jenny presented them with gifts on behalf of MCA:

- Avonlea Armstrong-Green - Membership Chair since October 2020
- Maureen Britton - Central Regional Representative since June 2019
- Edward Cloud - Interlake Regional Representative since June 2019
- Carolyn Gwyer - Westman Regional Representative since February 2021
- Sharon Marshall - Professional Development Chair since October 2019
- Kelsey Shiaro - PHC Chair since October 2021
- Sonya Williams - ChoralFest Chair since September 2019

Stuart highlighted the work of outgoing board member Catherine Robbins, who has been on the board in her current tenure since October 2016 as Vice President, President, and Past President. He thanked her for her tireless work and dedication to MCA during her tenure on the board. The work she has done leaves a lasting legacy for MCA.

Catherine presented the proposed board for 2022-23, noting the people who would be changing roles and/or filling in new board positions.

President: **David Sawatzky**
Past President: **Stuart Sladden**
Vice President: **Naomi Russell**
Treasurer: **Adam Kilfoyle**
Outreach & Advocacy Director: **Katie Donnelly**
Intra-Provincial Coordinator: **Crystal Kolt**
Program Director: **Jorrel Camuyong**
Director: **Philip Lapatha**
Director: **Katy Harmer**
Director: **Nancy Gomes Fast**

Catherine expressed her excitement for MCA's future, thanked all of the outgoing board members, committee members, volunteers and Jenny for their commitment and dedication to MCA. She encouraged those in the room to get involved with the exciting things in MCA's future.

MOTION 6: That the board of directors be elected as presented.

M/S: Catherine Robbins/Maureen Ferley. CARRIED.

11. Presentation of Awards of Distinction

Stuart presented several Awards of Distinction as nominated by members of the community, noting that full bios of all the winners would soon be available on our website:

- Horizon – Johanna Hildebrand, director (Winnipeg), Valdine Anderson (Winnipeg), and Kimberly Lapatha (Winnipeg) – MCA Award for Artistic Excellence
- Naomi Russell (Brandon), Sonya Williams (Winnipeg) – MCA Spirit Award
- Unique Quintet – Carole Carlson and Anita Munn (Winnipeg/Westman) – MCA New Voice Award

12. Performance of Winning Entry from the 2021 Frances Seaton Choral Competition Composition by Ecco Singers (Winnipeg)

David spoke about the FSCCC and composer Michael Kurek's winning piece from the 2021 competition, *Lord of All Being*. Michael shared a few words about the piece before the performance by Ecco Singers, directed by Jorrel Camuyong and Roberta Velarde.

13. Other/New Business

There was no new business to note.

14. Performance – Ecco Singers

Ecco Singers performed two more songs.

15. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 12:50pm.

MOTION 7: That the meeting be adjourned.

M: David Sawatzky. CARRIED.