



## Manitoba Choral Association Inc. Annual General Meeting

Saturday, October 23, 2021  
Virtual Meeting – Zoom  
11:00 am

### Draft Minutes

**Present:** Stuart Sladden (Chair), Adam Kilfoyle, Avonlea Armstrong-Green, Carolyn Gwyer, Catherine Robbins, David Sawatzky, Edward Cloud, Janna Reid, Leanne Cooper-Carrier, Marilyn Redekop, Maureen Britton, Naomi Russell, Sharon Marshall, Sonya Williams, Stephanie Pinette, Kelsey Shiaro, Millie Hildebrand, Ron Krug (Honorary Member), Elizabeth Gebauer (Strathclair Theatre Chorus – voting), Vic Hooper (Honorary Member), Rosemary Komadowski (Assiniboine Chorus – voting), Rachel Cameron (Assiniboine Chorus), Brittany Mielnichuk (Rainbow Harmony Project – voting), Jenny Steinke-Magnus (recording)

1. **Welcome:** The meeting was called to order at 11:11 AM. Stuart did a land acknowledgement and went through Zoom and meeting protocols.

2. **Adoption of Agenda:** Stuart requested one change in the agenda: to move item 8, "Other/new business," to just after the approval of the 2020 minutes.

**MOTION 1:** That the agenda be adopted with the change noted above  
(M/S Naomi Russell/David Sawatzky) CARRIED.

3. **Minutes of 2020 Annual General Meeting**

**MOTION 2:** That the minutes from the 2020 AGM be approved as presented  
(M/S Brittany Mielnichuk/David Sawatzky) CARRIED.

4. **Other/New Business:**

Honorary Membership: Stuart announced that an MCA Honorary Membership was being awarded to Marilyn Redekop. Honorary Membership is MCA's highest award reserved for people who have distinguished themselves and have made significant contributions over the years to both the Choral Community and specifically to MCA's work. Marilyn is a powerhouse in the choral community and has been an active participant in MCA's work and the board for many years. Stuart congratulated Marilyn for this well-deserved award.

5. **Board of Directors Reports:** Stuart gave an overview of the Board reports. He reviewed some of the highlights from 2020-21:

- **Library:** We are excited to report that the library inventory project that began a few summers ago has now been completed! We now have an accurate accounting of approximately 5,000 titles and we are grateful to Janna and her team of volunteers for taking on this monumental task.
- **ChoralFest:** Due to the pandemic, we had to cancel the in-person ChoralFest for 2020. Instead, we offered: a series of video workshops on various topics by choral specialists from across Canada; a vocal jazz roundtable discussion with the members of Cadence (Toronto); an opportunity for choirs to submit a pre-recorded video for adjudication by Carrie Tennant (Vancouver); and a virtual choral workshop with Dr. Elroy Friesen (Winnipeg), which unfortunately had to be cancelled. While not the same, this version of ChoralFest was generally well received by those choirs and choristers that were able to participate. Planning is underway for this year's ChoralFest, so stay tuned for more details. It is our hope that we will return to an in-person ChoralFest in 2022.
- **PHC:** We also had to cancel our PHC program for 2021. Instead, we took on the task of putting together a provincial virtual choir video. Rick Hepper-Mueller (Altona) conducted *Wonderful World Medley*, which was arranged by composer Jonathan Alexiuk (Winnipeg). Traditionally, the winning piece for the Frances Seaton Choral Composition Competition would be performed during the PHC concert. For 2021, Rob Monson and Bluestem (Winnipeg) worked to create a virtual choir video of the winning piece, *Be Love* composed by Scott Reimer. Combined, these two videos have been viewed over 11,000 times since their respective releases earlier this year. We are currently working on tentative plans for PHC 2022, but plans are still uncertain due to the pandemic. Finally, after many years as the chair of this committee, Marilyn will be stepping down and passing the torch to Kelsey Shiaro. We wish Kelsey well in her new role.
- **Professional Development:** We had a very busy year with workshops and events related to professional development. Beyond our typical PD programs of TEMPO and Tried & True, we offered a three-part series on Embracing Diversity and Inclusion in Choir (Terence M. Taylor, Los Angeles, CA), a two-part series on vocal health and the aging voice (Dr. Janet Brenneman and Dr. Matt Pauls, Winnipeg), a panel discussion on thinking like an adjudicator (Zimfira Poloz, Hamilton, ON; Dr. Bruce Kotowich, Windsor, ON; Dr. Janet Brenneman, Winnipeg; and Dr. David Sawatzky, Winnipeg), and a yoga and mindfulness workshop specifically geared for singers (Rose Van Der Hooft, Winnipeg). These were all well received events. One of the added benefits of moving our programming to a virtual platform was our ability to reach participants

from all over our province and beyond. We are planning for a similar year of programming this year, with the hope that we will be able to shift a completely virtual platform to offering hybrid sessions.

- **IDEA (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Accessibility) Committee**: This new group met a number of times over the past year. The discussions came from a place of vulnerability and trust, and often challenged worldviews and questioned traditional ways of doing things in choir, and MCA's role through it all. As the group worked through its terms of reference, a realization became clear that a traditional "committee" in its typical function was not the right fit for such a collective. Instead, it was felt that transforming the IDEA committee into a Special Interest Group, where like-minded folks could gather to explore topics and ideas, was more appropriate and would allow for more voices to become involved in these important discussions. The group has recently begun work on some really exciting projects, from working to develop an IDEA policy for MCA, hosting regular article and discussion sharing sessions, to potentially hosting a symposium in 2023. This is very exciting work indeed!
- **Administration & Governance**: As a board we have been very busy behind the scenes supporting MCA's programming and doing work at an organizational level in order to remain vital and relevant to our membership for years to come. Shortly following our last AGM, we moved our office to the CMU campus. This was a monumental task, but we are thrilled with the new space and hope to share it with you all once public health restrictions ease.

Over the last year, we have also been hard at work on a rebranding project. Once complete, MCA will have a fresh new "look" and a new website. One exciting feature of the new website is the new point of sale style library platform. This will make borrowing repertoire and maintaining the library much easier.

Another major initiative the board has recently taken on is a complete governance review. During our August retreat we began by looking at ways to increase efficiency and effectiveness of the MCA board. We struck a governance review committee, which will review our discussions and work to refine the board structure and by-laws in order to best serve our vision and mission and the choral community moving forward. The results of this work will be presented to the membership at our next AGM in June.

- **From the Regions**:  
**Eastman** had to cancel their events last year. They began this season with a "Bring the Sing" event in early October, which brought singers together to sight-read through a number of popular choral selections. Unfortunately, due to current health

restrictions in the region future plans are again on hold, but people are ready to sing just as soon as they are able.

**Central** also had to cancel or modify events in the region last year. They did hold a virtual PD session in February in lieu of their traditional vocal jazz workshop which was very successful. CMYC was able to meet in September to work toward the recording of a virtual project, which will be released later this month. In addition, CMCA was able to offer micro grants to support choirs in the region as they worked to develop new programs that were in compliance with public health restrictions. On a sad note, CMCA lost a valued member of their committee with the passing of James Reynolds this past August. He was a dedicated member of the choral community in Manitoba and a much-loved choral teacher and leader in the Portage la Prairie community. He will be greatly missed.

**Westman** saw many of their programs cancelled last year, but this fall, choirs have begun to resume their activities with safety protocols in place. WMYC was able to meet in September for in-person and virtual rehearsals to work toward the recording of a virtual program that will be released soon. They were even able to hold a live private concert to conclude their program this year.

**Norman**, like the other regions, reports that in-person choral happenings were very slow last year. However, they did have some good online opportunities and engagement, which they hope to build on this coming season.

**MOTION 4:** That all reports be accepted as presented  
(M/S Catherine Robbins/Marilyn Redekop) CARRIED.

6. **Auditors' Report and Financial Statements:** Adam reviewed the financial statements that were circulated. The Exchange Group has provided a clean audit opinion. The Board approved the statements by e-vote earlier this week.

We ended the 2020-21 year with a \$17,168 surplus. This is because the auditors indicated that we should recognize the \$20,000 forgivable portion of the CEBA loan we received last year (since we have the intention of paying \$40,000 of the \$60,000 loan back), so they split up the amount and have put \$10,000 in 2019-20 revenues, and \$10,000 in 2020-21 revenues. This is noted on the "Other Income"/Government subsidies line on page 6.

Because we had anticipated ending the year with a surplus, the board decided in the summer to make a \$15,000 contribution to the Endowment Fund at year end. We now have an accumulated surplus of \$39,669, which is a strong position to be in. Adam noted that as a non-profit organization, we are allowed to have a certain amount of accumulated surplus, and this amount is not a concern: we need to have a solid financial footing. This will help us in the future if we ever run into unforeseen circumstances. Jenny noted that for our operation

grants, they expect a use-of-surplus plan if our organization's surplus ever reaches 50% of our operating budget (approximately \$100,000).

Members expressed gratitude, noting that it feels really good to have this surplus. It is a very different financial position than just a few years ago. The office move has contributed greatly to this, as have the various grants we have brought in. Members thanked Jenny for her work in this area.

**MOTION 3:** That the audited financial statements for the year ending August 31, 2021 be approved as presented  
(M/S Adam Kilfoyle/Ron Krug) CARRIED.

7. **Appointment of Auditors for 2020/2021 Fiscal Year:**

Adam noted that we are happy with The Exchange Group (TEG), but we were unhappy with the timing of the completion of the 2021 statements, as we were scrambling to finalize them at the last minute. The fieldwork person changes every year, so there is always a bit of a learning curve. We do recommend that we continue to employ TEG for our audits, but in the future, we need to be a bit clearer and firmer on our expected deadlines.

**MOTION 6:** That The Exchange Group be appointed as our Auditors for the 2021/2022 fiscal year  
(M/S Adam Kilfoyle/Janna Reid) CARRIED.

8. **Election of Directors:** Stuart thanked the four outgoing board members for their work on the board, and for all the work, time, dedication, and support they have generously given to MCA during their respective times on the Board. Their passion for the choral arts and their insights and ideas have been incredibly valuable to the ongoing work of MCA and they will be missed around the board table.

- **Leanne Cooper-Carrier** has served on the board for the last year and a half as our marketing and communications chair
- **Stephanie Pinette** has served on the board for the last five years as our membership chair and most recently as our Norman representative
- **Janna Reid** has served on the board for the last six years as our Library chair
- **Marilyn Redekop** has served on the board for the last 13 years as our PHC chair

Catherine presented the Nominating Committee report, echoing Stuart's sentiments about the outgoing board members. She noted that we will be moving our AGM to June after this meeting. This will better suit our programming year and give board members a chance to become acquainted with their board positions before jumping into planning projects.

At this AGM, we are presenting an interim board, which will come into effect today, and at the June AGM, we will begin anew. Several positions will remain vacant while we evaluate the structure of the board.

Stuart called for nominations from the floor three times as per protocol and there were none. Stuart thanked the slate of officers for allowing their names to stand.

**MOTION 7:** That the slate of officers be accepted as presented  
(M/S Catherine Robbins/Naomi Russell) CARRIED.

9. **Other/New Business:**

No other new business was noted.

10. **Adjournment:** Stuart thanked everyone for joining the meeting, and for their continued support of MCA. The meeting was adjourned at 12:05.

**MOTION 8:** That the meeting be adjourned  
(David Sawatzky) CARRIED.