

Minutes of the meeting of the House of Delegates of the Pioneer District of SPEBSQSA, Inc.
held on October 14, 2016, in the Great Lakes 4-5 Room of the Radisson Plaza Hotel in Kalamazoo, MI

1. Call to Order:

District President Mike Hansen called the meeting to order at 1:36 p.m. He asked Chris Berry, District Director of Chorus Director Development, to lead everyone in the singing of "The Old Songs".

2. Quorum:

District Secretary Jim McMahan determined that a quorum (30% of authorized delegates) was present.

[NOTE: The sign-in sheets were attached to the original copy of these minutes.]

3. Agenda:

Mike Hansen directed the attention of the delegates to the agenda he had prepared. Dan Bezaire (Windsor) moved that the agenda be adopted. Earl Berry (Detroit-Oakland) offered the second. **Motion approved.**

4. Minutes of the previous meeting:

The secretary had provided minutes of the HOD meeting held on April 22, 2016. Doran McTaggart (Windsor) moved that the minutes be approved, and Bud Kraft (Grand Rapids) made the second. **Motion approved.**

5. Memorial for deceased members:

Paul Ellinger, District Director for Membership, led a memorial service to honor members who had passed away since the last HOD meeting. He began the ceremony with the traditional reading of "Passing of the Bar" by Alfred Lord Tennyson. Then he listed District members who were now known to have joined the "Chapter Eternal":

Chuck Wilson (Kalamazoo chapter)
Allan Toivonen (Sault Ste. Marie chapter)
Arthur (Steve) Hesse, Jr. (Livingston County chapter)
George Taylor (Lansing chapter)
Frank Bateson (Saginaw Bay and Mt. Pleasant chapters)
Bob Whitledge (Motor City Metro chapter)
Robert Feistel (Muskegon chapter)
Hank Hedges (Gaylord chapter)
Fred Hanson (Gratiot County and Gaylord chapters)
Earl Krieger (Benton Harbor/St. Joseph chapter)
Fran Durham (Detroit Oakland chapter)
Daniel Goodearl (Traverse City chapter)
Dennis Perry (Kalamazoo chapter)
Nicholas Piccione (Grosse Pointe chapter)

Paul concluded the ceremony by quoting a poem written by Linda Jo Jackson entitled "I'm Free". He noted that these 14 members would no longer be on the risers with us. Their voices are silenced. They are friends remembered for the part they played in the history of their chapters and the District. May they sing chords on high, and may their friends and family remember the joy and happiness that barbershop singing brought to their lives!

6. Treasurer's Report:

Mike Hansen reminded the delegates that Robb Smith took over responsibility for the treasurer function during the previous fall. However, he had since discovered that other obligations were preventing him from continuing in that role. Consequently, Chris Berry has assumed the responsibility. Mike asserted that the books of the District are in good shape. He admitted that the report to be presented at this time was not as complete as would be desired since this was the third day on the job for Chris.

6. Treasurer's Report (cont.):

Mike noted that Chris would walk the delegates through the financial report. Afterwards, the 2017 budget for the District will be presented for approval. That document had been reviewed by the BOD earlier in the day.

Chris displayed a copy of the Balance Sheet which indicated a balance of \$83,202.52---divided among six different accounts. With addition of other assets, the total assets of the District were reported as \$85,473. He noted that he could not currently explain some of the details on the sheet, but he knew there were some liabilities. He pointed out that the equity and net income for the District was currently at \$11,000.

Next, Chris displayed the Profit and Loss Statement for the District. He offered to send out electronic copies of his documents, and it was decided that they would go to Mike Hansen for subsequent distribution.

It was explained that the P&L Statement showed just income and expenses for the current year. Chris emphasized that a cost center approach was being used for the financial records. He cited the \$16,000 figure for income that was not in a cost center. He indicated that there will be negative expenses shown later that are really income.

Chris pointed to the \$10,000 in administrative costs. He then mentioned this fall convention has brought in \$1575 so far, but is shown as negative income. He summarized that the spring convention brought in about \$24,000 in income, but had expenses around \$15,000. This led to a net for that convention of \$9200.

Finally, he cited the net income to date of \$16,000, less the expenses of \$5000, which leads to a net income of \$11,000 before considering this convention.

Chris then displayed the budget being submitted for approval. He noted that this was a continuing budget. It was developed from the history of expenses of previous years, but projected expenses for 2017 were considered.

The delegates were asked to direct their attention to some numbers at the bottom. Chris noted that the District had \$7893 in income in 2015. 2016 was projected to generate \$16,000 in income. Finally, 2017 was projected to have a \$1000 loss.

It was wondered if the 2016 increase in income was related to the increase in District dues. Chris determined that the increase in dues income in 2016 was actually not very much.

A question was asked about whether the District's net worth was increasing. Chris confirmed that it was in 2016, but 2017 would show a \$1000 loss. Another question was why there would be a loss in 2017. Chris noted that was due to the way the budget was developed. He couldn't explain why that was done. He did note that it assumed all of the money budgeted would be spent, and all of the income projected would be received.

Doran McTaggart (Windsor) reiterated his concern about the amount of money that the District gives to quartets and choruses going to International. For the choruses, he noted that it has always been \$50/man---up to 60 attendees. That number goes back to the 1980s. He mentioned that air fares and room costs have gotten much higher since then. He concluded that his own chapter would have to refuse the right to go to International if it were to qualify.

Doran also mentioned that the District has never given anything to the quartets that go to International. He indicated that the Sendoff generates \$200 for each quartet. The balance of the Sendoff income goes to the winning chorus. He noted that about \$3000 has been given to choruses in the last few years.

He pointed out the return of the Jug program in the last few years has generated more money for the quartets. Consequently, it has been possible for Sendoff support for quartets to be reduced.

Doran asked that the budget committee give consideration for more support of choruses. Mike Hansen noted that a budget is a blueprint, and he felt that this issue could be considered further by the BOD.

6. Treasurer's Report (cont.):

Dale Hanson (Gaylord) reported that his chapter had decided to discontinue the running of Bush League. He indicated that he is looking for another chapter to take on the program. He felt that this change might result in the modification of numbers in this budget.

Peter Stephens-Brown (Marquette) moved that the 2017 budget be approved. Dave Anderson (Rochester) made the second. **Motion approved.**

[NOTE: Mike Hansen indicated that Matt Gorman and Kyle Snook had proposed that Matt's report on the Society's Strategic Plan be considered before Kyle gave his report on Harmony Foundation.]

8. Society Strategic Plan (out of order):

Mike Hansen reported that the District considered doing some strategic planning, but had decided it would be best to hear about the Society's work first. This is why Matt Gorman, a representative of the Society's Strategic Planning Committee, was invited to this convention. Matt had already done a brainstorming session with the BOD that morning.

Matt identified himself as a member of a chapter in the Carolinas District. He noted that he was not an employee of the Society. He indicated he became a member of the Society's Strategic Planning Committee in May 2016. He reported that the committee is going through phases. Currently, it is in the listening phase. The next phase will be the synthesis phase that will create a plan, and that will be followed by the rollout phase.

Matt emphasized that anything discussed at this meeting should not be interpreted as a move that the Society is making today. He urged that the delegates to speak freely if a controversial topic is mentioned.

Matt also asked that the delegates follow a "ditto" rule. If someone agrees with another person's idea, it is only necessary to say "ditto".

Matt identified his role as one who is listening, and wants to hear what members are saying. He then asked if anyone had received a survey in the last six months. He reported that 2900 responses were received from the 22,000 members who received them. In a corporate sense, that is a huge response---more than 10%. Matt emphasized that was speaking as a BHS member, and not as a Society board member. He asserted that members should be heard by the Society. It should hear what our struggles and feelings are, what we want more of, and what we want less of. Therefore, he urged members to respond whenever they receive a survey. That info is given to his committee, and it allows the creation of reports such as he will present today.

The Society board had a retreat in May at which it reviewed the Four Pillars that have been developed. Matt described them as being analogous to a future mission statement.

Matt cited the Four Pillars:

- (1) Through the medium of barbershop harmony, we build a global community of artists;
- (2) Through the medium of barbershop harmony, we elevate artistic and leadership skills through education and best practices;
- (3) Through the medium of barbershop harmony, we establish lifelong singing as a core community asset;
- (4) We scale our impact by growing social enterprise, individual philanthropy, and institutional philanthropy.

In regard to the last Pillar, Matt noted that social enterprise is things like Harmony Marketplace, while individual philanthropy is donations to Harmony Foundation (as Kyle Snook will cover later).

Matt reiterated that the S/P committee is in the listening (gathering) phase now, and getting as much info as possible from our 22,000 members.

8. Society Strategic Plan (out of order) (cont.):

The process that will be followed was then described. Matt noted that each person had a writing tool and two pieces of paper before him. He announced that two questions will be asked. The first question was: "What do you think is the biggest opportunity for the BHS?" He asked for responses that were one or two words.

Matt alluded to comments made earlier at the BOD where things like "youth", "gender inclusion", and "marketing" were mentioned. The responses would be collected at the tables where Matt will acquire them. He indicated that a conversation will be held about what those things are, and how a plan can be created to achieve them. He noted that the responses would be recorded and shared with the members of the S/P Committee for the development of a plan.

Matt admitted that he shouldn't have said "youth" earlier. Almost everyone wrote that on their papers. One delegate noted that he said it because there are more people around, and most of them are young. He declared that we need them. He also asserted that most of them do not know that we exist. Another delegate reported that a youth at a recent chapter show said that "you sing songs with words I don't know and don't care about". Matt suggested that could be summarized with the word "relevance". At the BOD meeting, someone had said his son doesn't want to sing his dad's music.

Matt moved on the idea of how do we get youth involved in barbershop. He invited the delegates to offer ideas on how to do this. One delegate suggested having SATB barbershop arrangements. It was noted that women rarely get to sing barbershop with men. It was noted that there are more female barbershoppers than male, however. Matt observed that youth don't see gender.

One delegate disagreed with the idea that we were still "our father's chorus". The delegate cited three chapters that were successful because fathers were bringing in their sons, and the sons were bringing in their friends. Matt asked rhetorically how many other chapters are doing that. He felt that the problem may be a lack of excitement by the fathers. He thought we might also be seeing lack of connection with others.

Another delegate mentioned the reaction of a new 20 year old member of his chapter who was amazed when he heard the tag of a polecat. He suggested that we don't always have to sing new stuff; the old stuff is still good.

An additional comment came from a delegate who felt that every person has the ability to enjoy singing a chord. He asserted "that is the hook". It is still the old-fashioned way of doing anything. We still need to get it out. The delegate wondered how much the District gets into school music programs. He observed that more of the arrangements he was seeing at International were of newer songs. He cited the word "exposure" as being an operative term.

Matt combined the next group of responses in a category he identified as "musically relevant", i.e., singable arrangements. He also used the phrase "musical outreach". Matt wondered if this might be two categories. "Musically relevant" might be new stuff. "Relative" stuff, however, could include polecats because they connect everyone in barbershop. The delegate who wrote the phrase "musically relevant" cited the case of singing Christmas carols in barbershop style in a mall noted that they captured the attention of three generations at the same time. People would even get their picture taken afterwards to make a connection.

Another delegate threw out the word "intergenerational". Matt expanded that into the word "timeless", i.e., music that can expand into other generations.

Dave Anderson suggested that skilled parody writers in the Society create parodies of old songs that use modern words. Matt pointed out that those persons are usually not BHS employees, so they would have to be approached individually. He noted that some actions would have to come down eventually to individuals, or to BHS staff who appoint persons to execute them. Matt asserted that ultimately we have to define how the opportunities are executed.

The next response that Matt had received as identified as "cost". The delegate who submitted it was referring primarily to dues and other expenses that youth members incur.

8. Society Strategic Plan (out of order) (cont.):

An additional response was submitted by a delegate that he labeled as "gender". He contended that half of the population is being ignored by BHS, and other half is being ignored by the Sweet Adelines. He advocated more gender-free, gender-neutral activities.

Matt referred to a tag line at a Nashville convention that was identified as "Better World Singing", and there was no gender limitation in it. He noted that there are two different schools of thought on this topic. He cited the original 1938 documents that established the Society, and which clearly identify the Society as a male organization. Originally, there was even a racial barrier, but that barrier has been broken. The gender barrier has not been broken. Matt mentioned affiliations the Society has with mixed harmony organizations, so it is not opposed to having connections with females. He asked if there were any ideas on how to make barbershop an arranging style, and not a men's activity.

One delegate noted that, currently, men cannot join S/A, and women cannot join BHS. If dual memberships in each group were allowed, he didn't anticipate a big shift. However, he referred to a transgender friend who sings in BHS, but would prefer to sing with S/A. Matt admitted that this is a topic that is coming up for discussion.

Another delegate felt this is a topic that we are not quite ready to discuss yet. He acknowledged that attitudes are changing. For now, he concluded that mixed quarteting is on the rise. He saw that movement as a way to make social change, rather than try to change two existing groups. Merger of the two groups may be in the future.

Matt reported that all of the surveys received so far have almost given the Society permission to experiment and add. The emphasis has been, however, to not take away anything that we already have. Matt noted that some people have said they will terminate their membership when this topic comes up, because it is not what they have had in the past 30-40 years. They associate the great memories they have had in that time. As a young member, Matt observed that he will have 30-40 years ahead of him that he hopes will be just as awesome.

One delegate admitted that he struggles with the concept of mixed membership. While he has great social times with his wife and other women, he also enjoys having a "guy's evening". He indicated that he also sings in mixed choruses. Matt surmised that mixed gender memberships might take away that experience.

A delegate returned to the issue of how to reach youth. He found it odd that he had to learn about barbershop from a chapter president who went to the same gym with him. He felt that his internet browsing history should have revealed that he was interested in singing. He was surprised that he never saw anything on Facebook. He felt we should be functioning like a vendor that markets his product on FB.

He also asked if the delegates were familiar with Redditt. He suggested that our barbershop-Redditt exposure is a joke. He wondered if there were plans to have Society control over social media options. He asserted that leverage through Redditt was important.

Matt moved on to the second question for which he wanted a response on paper slips from the delegates. That question was: "What do you think is the thorniest issue that BHS faces now, or in the future, and what should be done to avert it?" He emphasized that the conversation should focus on the averting. The word "thorniest" was translated as being the same as the word "threat".

Mike Hansen restated the question as: "What is the biggest threat that BHS faces?" He offered a reminder that responses should consist of one or two words.

One of the first responses that Matt selected said "time". He asked for an explanation. The responder observed that there is only so much time available in a day, and too many things to do. Prioritization of one's time becomes a problem. The responder alluded to the challenges that youth face with the management of their time. He cited the usage of planners by 8 year olds.

Mat interpreted the response as one of people being busy. Therefore, it becomes hard for us to market barbershop to them because of the implied additional time commitment.

8. Society Strategic Plan (out of order) (cont.):

Another response was "evolution". The responder noted that many things have changed---especially in our society. He asserted that all things have to change with time. He felt that part of our problem was that we haven't changed. He contended that we are still seen in a stereotypical role. He admitted that when our musical genre was first suggested to him five years earlier, he rejected it because of the stereotype. He later realized that he was wrong in his perception. He was glad that got an exposure from a son who did not know the stereotype. He summarized that, until stereotypes are destroyed, people continue to make decisions according to them.

The responder felt that we must let know people how we are evolving. He mentioned an opportunity he had to expose a 13 year old to some modern barbershop on his computer. He asserted that now we have something for everybody. He was glad that we have younger arrangers preparing music that connects with younger audiences. He alluded further to the "History of Barbershop" CD that shows evolution of arrangements over the last 100 years, and even between the 20's and the 90's. The responder noted that his response was actually given as "evolution, or non-evolution". He felt that if we don't evolve, we won't survive.

Someone suggested that we are evolving, but there is a perception that we are not. The responder agreed, but wasn't sure if we are evolving enough, and letting people know that we are.

Another response was "keep male Society". The responder declared that he still wanted to see male quartets. He likened the circumstance to other groups that choose to limit their focus. As a result, they may never become large---but that is what they want to do. He asserted that he still wanted BHS to be a bastion of male activity. Matt agreed that all of the survey results support that position.

Matt then listed several responses that seemed to be related: "declining membership", "retaining members", "not replaced by younger members", "old age!" One of the responders noted that of the 22,000 members, perhaps 20,000 are old. He noted that this fact tends to perpetuate the stereotype previously mentioned. He felt that we should promote the appearance of more performers dressed in younger garb and singing modern songs. Matt summarized the comments by suggesting that there may not be a lot of ideas of how to address this issue. Somehow, there must be more of an infusion of middle age (30-45) performers.

A delegate shared that he came into the Society during that age in his life. He met another person who is in that age group now, and was interested in joining. The delegate urged that we do more recruiting of those who are in this age group because their families are grown, and they have more time.

The last response that Matt cited was labeled "membership involvement". He noted that our challenge has been to get members "on the ground" to do the things that need to be done. The Society board has referred to this as being apathy or stagnation. We are not always moving to the next level. There's been a suggestion to hire a national marketing firm. Matt asked for opinions about that option. How do we incentivize, or re-ignite a fire and a passion for barbershop?

One delegate noted that he has seen generational differences develop since the end of the "baby boomers"---the group most represented at this meeting. He felt that we do things that don't connect with later generations (like the 20- and 30-year olds). He asserted that we must know that group as a target audience. He alluded to attention spans that are much shorter now. He felt that barbershop is a commitment. He mentioned that he lives in a college town (Ypsilanti), and his chorus gets young people. However, they don't stay. Often, it is due to schedule changes, or weekly involvement is less acceptable. Matt observed that this might be more of an opportunity rather than a threat.

Another delegate mentioned the success his chapter had had in selling ads for its shows. However, the chapter still has problems in getting people to come to them. This happens---in spite of the marketing that the chapter does and the media publicity that it gets.

Matt called this an issue of relevance---where our fire dies and no one notices. We might disappear publicly, and no one would ever know. The key is still marketing and awareness. He recognized the frustration the delegate was expressing in wanting to know how to do it. He asserted this was part of the goal behind info gathering sessions such as this one.

8. Society Strategic Plan (out of order) (cont.):

Mike Hansen thanked Matt for his efforts, and hoped that this discussion was not just a one time thing. He wanted to see this as a continual discussion throughout the Society. He saw this meeting as one of many throughout the country. He declared that anything the Society does in strategic planning must be implemented by people such as those gathered here. He felt that everyone present was passionate about growth of the Society.

7. Harmony Foundation Representative Report (return to agenda):

Kyle Snook was then introduced as the rep for H/F. He mentioned that he lived in Kalamazoo for the first 8-10 years of his life.

Although his purpose in being at the convention was to be a fund-raiser, he was privileged to be giving away money at the moment. The amounts were about \$1000 to the District, and about \$5000 to its chapters. He noted that delegates should see him afterwards to receive the checks for their chapters. He reminded everyone that donors to H/F can have up to 30% of a donation directed to either the District or a chapter.

Kyle reflected on a comment heard earlier at the BOD meeting that the chapter experience is where members meet barbershop on a continuing basis.

Kyle cited a new Society staff position. This person is responsible for supporting the Healthy Chapter Initiative. The focus of this program is to help chapters that are on the cusp of being great, or are not doing very well and are frustrated in their efforts to improve. Heretofore, responses to those concerns were coming from different staff members on a hit-and-miss basis. Kyle reported that the donations of members through H/F have allowed for the funding of this full-time position, and no cost is being incurred by the Society. Chapters now have a resource to help them to be at their highest potential. Chapters everywhere should be able to offer great experiences for their members

Kyle reported that Donny Rose, director of Harmony University, has shared with H/F his dream that some member of every chapter could attend H/U once every four years for free. This might be the director, or an arranger, or a person in a leadership role. This is an example of the dreams that come to the attention of H/F.

Kyle emphasized that the support of youth programs may be mentioned a lot by H/F, but there is still a concern that members of all ages are being satisfied in their experiences.

He noted that Pioneer is fortunate to have TVBC. He reported that 40 youth choruses applied for the most recent Mid-Winter in San Antonio, and 20 have been accepted. He had just heard that 26 have applied for the 2018 Mid-Winter---including one from Africa. There was a chorus from Hong Kong that came previously.

Kyle asserted that the attendance of those groups came about through donations from A-O-S and P-C donors---including some present at this meeting.

Kyle indicated that his goal for this weekend was to get 15 new donors to H/F. He observed that members who take the time to come to meetings like this are also the ones in chapters who care about making things better. A donation of \$10 a month translates into 33 cents/day. Is that amount a worthy investment in what the Society has given to each person present? Kyle noted that he would be around all weekend, and he hoped to get new donors signed up in less than 30 seconds.

Those who are already donating \$10 a month were urged to upgrade their giving to a larger amount. He cited the benefit of giving with his own experience of being in a college quartet that was enabled to go to the Toronto convention because of a H/F scholarship. That experience convinced him barbershop was something he wanted to do for a really long time. He described his quartet experiences as being "giggling" experiences.

8. Society Strategic Plan (covered previously out of order):

9. Consent Calendar:

Mike Hansen referred to the reports from District officers that were provided in advance for this meeting. Reports for two of the areas (Financial Development and YIH) did not get submitted. Mike asked Dave Montera to give a verbal report on the YIH function and the Youth Chorus Festival on behalf of Aaron Pollard who was not present. Dave was identified as the Executive VP of the District, and also the newly elected moderator of the President's Council. This group consists of the DPs and EVPs from all of the districts.

Dave alluded to a verbal report given that morning at the BOD meeting by Aaron's father Craig. Dave reminded the delegates of recent notices in Society communications that the selection of choruses for the YCF is being done now by submission of video auditions. This process was deemed similar to quartets getting competition scores at the district level, and then being invited to come to an event. Since the goal is to insure that youth are still relevant in our District, it has been proposed that we institute a youth barbershop chorus championship competition. The winner will not necessarily be the District's rep to the Mid-Winter contest, but it gives us opportunities to meet those groups and support them, encourage them, and coach them. More importantly, they will be getting an audition video that is a performance/contest in front of a live audience.

Another idea coming out of the YIH function is the concept of having a Youth Chorus Festival at the District level. These would be held on an every other month basis instead of the one or two that are currently held. These would be localized events for students in a small area, and would include their teachers.

Dave reminded the delegates of Aaron's effort last year to contact all of the middle and high school music educators in the state. They were told about opportunities to get free music and other resources. He has gotten a lot of responses as a result of that effort. A specific response was also reported by the secretary that seven high schools have added barbershop training to their curriculum.

Dave mentioned that his chorus rehearses in the Royal Oak Middle School, and the teacher there has had the chorus perform a song with, and another song for the seventh grade students in a concert. Both songs got standing ovations. Subsequently, the students had to write a paper to complete their year of study. Many of them wrote about their barbershop experience. Several of them commented that was the first time they realized that they didn't have to become music majors in order to stay in music.

Mike Hansen asked Doug Weaver to report on the Financial Development function, and then segue into the Parade of Checks.

Doug began by noting that the financial report from Chris Berry indicated we had dropped \$1000 in our total assets. However, he felt the \$1000 the District received from H/F resulted in a breakeven situation.

Doug perceived his role as having two parts. One of those is to support H/F within the District. He noted that he and Kyle visited several chapters in the Detroit area a few months earlier. J.J. Hawkins, another H/F donor-care rep, was in the District recently, so Doug and J.J. visited the chapters in Holland, Grand Rapids, and Muskegon at that time.

He felt the second part of his role was to insure that TVBC has as much support as possible. That group is currently raising funds to go to San Antonio. Doug mentioned that the District has budgeted \$5000 for support of the youth chorus this year. He knew that TVBC is appearing on shows to earn funds, and has reached out to District chapters for support. Some chapters have already given money to TVBC in support of its cause. When the notice went out about the Parade of Checks at this HOD meeting, several chapters replied that they had already provided support. Doug confirmed that was OK; donations did not have to be made via the P-O-C. Checks will still be received today. He urged that chapters which have not made a commitment to do so soon. He felt that TVBC was a tremendous chorus that is representing the District very well.

Doug suggested that anyone with doubts about the value of supporting youth choruses should attend a Mid-Winter to see these youth groups singing at a very high level, and having a great time. They are really getting into barbershop.

Following Doug's remarks, checks were received from Marquette County, Lansing, Mt. Pleasant, Detroit-Oakland, Windsor, Gaylord, Grosse Pointe, Huron Valley, and Rochester. It was mentioned that the Pontiac-Waterford chapter had TVBC slated to be on its November 9 show, and was paying them \$1000.

9. Consent Calendar (cont.):

Roger Lewis pointed out that money raised through the P-O-C and in other ways covers the cost of getting TVBC to San Antonio. However, while they are there, their housing, their registration, and most of their meals are covered by H/F. He stressed that donations by Society members are essential to them getting there.

Doug Weaver took a moment to review some changes at the H/F. Jim Clark is now the new director for the region that includes Pioneer. Jim was not able to attend this convention because of another one happening at the same time. Kyle Snook was here on Jim's behalf. Doug expressed his appreciation for the chapter visits that Kyle made with him.

10. Other Reports:

(There were no items to cover in this category.)

11. Leadership Academy:

Mike Hansen reminded the HOD that, because of low registrations, it was necessary to cancel the L/A scheduled for last January. Consequently, there was a decision made to join with the Johnny Appleseed District for a L/A this coming January. This will allow the combining of resources, and the getting of even more talent and coaching to help chapters. Mike noted that more info on the event will come out soon. The date will be January 5-6, 2017. This one will be held in the Columbus (OH) area, but the plan is to move future events into the Toledo area. Hopefully, a combined event will result in more efficiency and effectiveness.

12. Parade of Checks:

(This activity was accomplished during Item 9.)

13. Old Business:

Mike invited Roger Lewis to talk about the plans for the videotaping of this convention, and how the stage will be configured.

Roger indicated that the stage at this convention will be twice as big as what you normally see. This change was necessitated by the size of the Grand Rapids chorus. That group will be bigger than any the District has had in a long time.

The District has gone to a new vendor for providing videotaping services. The lights will be suspended on a truss, and this should eliminate lights in the faces of the singers.

The videotaping will be done with a single camera in the back. The recording that is made of each competitor will be provided on a flash drive. There will still be a \$35 charge for that recording. Those competitors who have not yet paid should do so in the registration area.

Mike Hansen thanked Roger for the effort that he makes to arrange the conventions. Roger pointed out that Jim Roy from the Windsor chapter has been an invaluable helper on everything.

Peter Stephens-Brown (Marquette County) asked about the status of plans for mixed gender quartet competitions at the Traverse City convention. Mike Hansen indicated that decisions about the subject had not been made by the BOD. Peter pointed out that the topic was discussed at the last HOD meeting.

Dave Montera observed that a decision was made to allow mixed groups come to conventions at a "festival" level. This means they would be adjudicated, and receive coaching afterwards. He acknowledged that the District had not moved forward on this topic. However, it is something that can be discussed with Roger as schedules for upcoming conventions are planned. Mike Hansen noted that part of the challenge in doing this is the availability of time at a convention. Dave asserted that this was not something that needs any further approvals from either the HOD or the BOD.

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14. New Business:

(There were no items to cover in this category.)

15. Nomination Committee:

Dan Bezaire reported on behalf of this committee in his role as Immediate Past President.

Dan noted that, earlier in the day, the BOD had approved a decision to reduce the BOD to a five-person group. Previously, the BOD has had a membership of 11-12 persons. The smaller size of the board will enable it to be less cumbersome.

Dan emphasized that the slate he was presenting for a one-year term of office. This is necessary since he, Mike Hansen, and Dave Montera were already in the first year of what would be a two-year term. At the fall 2017 HOD meeting, a slate will then be presented for standard two-year terms.

The slate that Dan presented consisted of:

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| ---District President | Mike Hansen |
| ---Immediate Past President: | Dan Bezaire |
| ---Executive Vice-President | Dave Montera |
| ---Secretary | Jim McMahan |
| ---Treasurer | Chris Berry |

There were no nominations from the floor. Dave Anderson (Rochester) moved that the slate be approved. Earl Berry (Detroit-Oakland) made the second. **Motion approved.**

16. Adjournment:

At 3:10 p.m., the meeting was adjourned. Dan Bezaire was asked to lead the delegates in the singing of "Keep The Whole Singing".