

PIONEER DISTRICT, SPEBSQSA, INC.
MINUTES
HOUSE OF DELEGATE'S MEETING
APRIL 26, 2002

CALL TO ORDER: President Bonney called the meeting to order in the Michigan Room of Holiday Inn West, Lansing, Michigan at 2:04 p.m. The singing of "The Old Songs" was directed by Pioneer District Chorus Director Development VP Gene Hanover.

QUORUM: Dorn Burrill announced that a quorum was present. Thirty-eight officers and delegates out of a possible fifty-eight were present. There were three signed-in guests in attendance.

INVOCATION AND MEMORIAL TO DECEASED MEMBERS: A tribute to the deceased members since the last meeting was given by VP Dunckel for the following members: Art Shulze, DOC; Ron Seely , Grosse Pointe; Ross Payne, Hillsdale; Jim Stephens, Huron Valley; Bing Miller, Holland; Rick Hayner, Kalamazoo; Harold Stoner, Macomb; Bob Woodward, Pontiac-Waterford; Ross Christie, Sault Ste Marie; Robert Nisbet, Sault Ste Marie; Ed Wojtan, Wayne.

SOCIETY REPRESENTATIVE: Our Society Board Member Raleigh Bloch addressed the delegates bringing greetings from Society President Roger Lewis, the Society Board and the staff at Kenosha.

Raleigh reminded us once again that membership is the number one challenge we face. We are still experiencing a decline as of March with Society membership at 32330 and Pioneer District membership at 1267, down 32 from the previous year.

Member Services Committee has new tool to attract new members, "United we Sing." Your chapter forms the nucleus of the United We Sing chorus in your area, meet at beginning of each rehearsal. There is a United We Sing web site at unitedwesing.org where scripts and other materials can be ordered.

Society staff and board members are contributing to a multi-cultural task force to better reflect the diversity that we now have but can improve on.

Raleigh gave us a thumbnail sketch of some of our on-going musical and administrative programs: Senior Quartet Competition in all Districts now have a certified judging panel; Riptide is the new Quartet Development Quartet; YMIH programs are going well with camps and college quartet contests and seminars; Harmony College and Directors College scholarships available through both the Society and Pioneer District; Quartet coaching continues to be available at Harmony College; Harmony College curriculum is on the Society web page; a planned United We Sing Chorus of 8000 plus.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING: A motion was made by Delegate Clyde Whipple, supported by Delegate Van VandeZande, that the minutes be accepted as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

TREASURER'S REPORT: The current balance in the bank is approximately \$27,000. One year ago the balance was only \$5,000 so we are doing well. Treasurer's Report is held up as a result of computer problems involved in switching to the Quicken Program, but the accounting sheets will be forthcoming as soon as possible.

HARMONY FOUNDATION: Larry Gilhousen from Kenosha reminded us that Harmony Foundation has been a silent partner with the Society since 1959; that from 1969 there have been services projects such as Heartspring and Sing America/Sing Canada, but that the service projects were eliminated in the year 2000, and that now the mission is to preserve our musical legacy through support in schools. There

are two aspects: A general fund campaign and an endowment program. Harmony Foundation gives grants to Districts, to chapters for local projects and gives financial help directly to schools to support their music programs.

Larry indicated he would be in attendance for the entire time of the convention and that he would be available for consultation with any members who have questions or who are having problems and are seeking solutions in the areas where Harmony Foundation can help.

CONSENT CALENDAR: No reports were pulled from the consent calendar for further discussion, and no motion was made to accept the reports as submitted at this time.

PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS: President Bonney reviewed the seven goals which had been set at the Fall 2001 Convention and indicated that we are now debt free with money in the bank; the quality of music and musical performances is being raised by the successful chorus coaching clinics; there will be quartet coaching at the Bush League in September; there will be three chorus director workshop intensives this year; the grant application for 2002 is finished and ready to submit; membership is an on-going project; the cpres Yahoo Group is working well; planning for 2003 will take place at the August Board of Directors Meeting.

President Bonney announced that Steven Foster from the Holland and Grand Rapids Chapters is our new Laws & Regulations Committee Chairman and that he would be presenting the material later in the meeting concerning the By-Laws amendment.

President Bonney announced that Dan Casamatta of Grand Rapids Chapter is our new Parliamentarian.

President Bonney announced that Mike Moyer of Gratiot County Chapter is appointed to the new post of District Grant Development Committee Chairman.

President Bonney announced the appointment of Doug Lynn of Flint Chapter to be the COTS Coordinator and thanked John Gillespie for the wonderful job he had done in that capacity over the last several years.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

FUTURE CONVENTION LOCATIONS: Events VP Larry Parker confirmed that in the fall of 2002 and 2003 the District Convention will take place in Battle Creek with McCalmy Place as the headquarters hotel but with the competition in the fall of 2002 being held not at Kellogg High School Auditorium as in the past but at Northwestern Middle School Auditorium. Competition in the fall of 2003 will be back at Kellogg High School Auditorium. The spring of 2003 District Convention will take place in Lansing with Holiday Inn West being the headquarters hotel but with the quartet and chorus competition to be held at Eastern High School.

The District Convention for spring of 2004 will take place in Gaylord and the District Convention for the fall of 2004 is not yet determined.

Bid requests are going out for spring and fall of 2005, 2006 and 2007.

President Bonney announced that Larry Parker was stepping down at the end of the year as Events Vice President and indicated that both Steven Foster of Holland and Grand Rapids Chapters and John Szewc of Macomb Chapter had expressed an interest in that position. (Subsequent to this meeting, Steven Foster withdrew his name from the Events VP nomination list.)

NEW BUSINESS:

DISTRICT BY-LAWS AMENDMENT: The proposed amendment was an amendment to allow the Board of Directors to vote on proposals by e-mail or other electronic means without the necessity of a formal meeting when time is of the essence and the business in question should be accomplished before the next scheduled Board of Directors Meeting.

Laws & Regulations Committee Chairman Steven Foster read the proposed amendment to the delegates and guests, advised of the process he went through for obtaining Society approval of the language and advised of the process he went through to ascertain that there were no restrictions against such a by-laws amendment in the laws of the State of Michigan

President Bonney pointed out the need for the e-mail voting process that would be allowed by the amendment and assured that it could not get out of hand as each District Board of Directors Member must consent to take a vote without a face-to-face meeting, and that if even one Board Member opts to require a face-to-face meeting the process is voided and no binding e-mail vote can be taken.

A motion was made by Delegate Jack Schneider, seconded by Past President Mike O'Donnell that the Pioneer District By-Laws be amended as proposed.

Secretary Marvin Skupski indicated that because a two-thirds vote of those present and voting was required to pass an amendment to the by-laws the voting should be by a showing of hands.

President Bonney called for a showing of hands on the vote and the motion to amend the by-laws was carried by a vote of thirty-four to zero (34 to 0).

CONSENT CALENDAR: It was noted that the Consent Calendar Reports has not formally been submitted for approval. Motion to accept the Consent Calendar Reports made by Delegate Roger Lewis, seconded by Past President Russell Seely, carried unanimously.

COTS UPDATE: President Bonney again announced that Pioneer District COTS is now changed from the first week-end in December to the first week-end in January of each year, this change resulting from the many e-mails on PIONET Web Site asking that it be moved from the busy Christmas season to another time.

Additionally, COTS is now relocated from the Kellogg Center at Gull Lake in the Battle Creek area of Michigan to the Holiday Inn in Okemos, Michigan in the Lansing area of Michigan, a more central location in the District, this change also resulting from the many requests that a more central location be provided.

President Bonney once again thanked John Gillespie for his many years of service as Coordinator of COTS and thanked Doug Lynn of the Flint Chapter for his interest and enthusiasm on becoming the new COTS Coordinator.

The COTS information was an announcement only because it is already accomplished and no vote by the House of Delegates was needed to ratify or confirm it.

CHAPTER COACHES: It was announced by CSLT VP Doran McTaggart that Dorn Burrill and Russell Seely had each completed the orientation and requirements in the Chapter Coach Program and each was presented with his Certificate.

ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION: Executive VP Bruce Smith supervised and facilitated while the delegates and guests at each table endeavored to provide answers to the three questions posed in the separate Agenda that was provided for the Round-Table Discussion portion of the House of Delegates Meeting. The results were as follows:

Round-Table Question One: What can the District do or do better that would help the Chapters?

Responses:

- Coordinate schedules, central scheduling;
- Getting fired up at COTS to give us the skills to bring back and make it happen at the chapter level;
- Do proactive visits to inform the chapters what the District can do for them;
- Distribute copies of Harmonizer to doctors waiting rooms and other places where they will be seen;
- Fund District Champs visits to chapters;
- Set up a District Library of video and audio tapes for chorus use;
- Offer classes in show production at COTS for new programs like United We Sing;
- Provide credit card authorization process that the chapters can use;
- Support for grant writing at the chapter level;
- Continue grant applications;
- Continue coaching;
- Communication that is concise and consistent about what is being done now by the District.

Round-Table Question Two: How can the District Support the chapter's efforts to make chapter meetings more fun and attractive to their membership?

Responses:

- Provide templates for chapters for running more diversified chapter programs;
- Provide funds for scheduled quartet visits to chapters on a regular basis;
- Bring back area counselors;
- Reintroduce Program Vice Presidents and training for them at COTS and Harmony Round-Up and Harmony College;
- Continue chorus coaching;
- Continue communication like the Yahoo Groups;
- Quartet visits with QCA involvement;
- Provide to chapters a listing of coaches and the area of expertise of each coach;

- Something to demonstrate methods of having fun such as videos, activity of the month, chapter visitations, District Quartet Champ visits to chapters;
- Utilize chapter coaches to assist in getting people to volunteer;
- Revitalize the Division Vice President system which encouraged chapter visits within divisions;
- Assist chapters in establishing action plans.

Round-Table Question Three: What, if anything, should the District stop doing?

Responses:

- This question was not addressed directly, and instead Executive VP Bruce Smith asked what we could do to make these House of Delegates Meetings more meaningful, and the unanimous response was: Implement all the things we talked about above and get the information out earlier and to the complete list of attendees including past presidents.

AWARDS: Alex Willox presented Harmony Foundation Award Certificates as follows:

Gold Award to Gaylord Chapter;

Silver Awards to Livingston County, Grosse Pointe, Hillsdale, Sault Ste Marie, and Muskegon Chapters;

Bronze Awards to Detroit-Oakland, Wayne, Lansing, Saginaw Bay, Traverse City, Flint, Rochester and Petoskey Chapters.

Larry Gilhousen stood and acknowledged Alex Willox for the Harmony Foundation work he has done in the District, and he pointed out that all chapters have a Harmony Foundation video tape and they should make sure that all chapter members view the tape.

Immediate Past President Don Bazely announced that we had no Pioneer District entries in the Public Relations category of the PROBE Contests but that we had four entries in the Pioneer District Bulletin Editor Contest: John Cowlshaw from Pontiac-Waterford Chapter, Art Lane from Holland Chapter, Bob Rancillio from Grosse Pointe Chapter and Albert Ford from Traverse City Chapter. Albert Ford from Traverse City was first place and is Bulletin Editor of the Year. Bob Rancillio from Grosse Pointe was second place, and both first and second place are entered in the Society-wide contest, and the results from that contest will be announced at the International Convention in Portland this summer.

ADJOURNMENT: A motion was made by YMIH VP Dave Anderson, supported by Delegate Doug Lynn, that the meeting be adjourned at 4:06 p.m. Past President Don Bazely directed “Keep the Whole World Singing.”

Respectfully submitted,

Marvin Skupski, District Secretary