

Minutes of the post convention meeting of the Pioneer District of SPEBSQSA, Inc.
held on October 21, 2012, in the Custer Room of the McCamly Plaza Hotel

I. Call to Order:

Jerry Ditto, the Pioneer District Management Team director for Events, called the meeting to order at 10:04 a.m.

2. Introductions & Headquarters Hotel:

Jerry began the meeting by identifying those who were present as representatives of the host chapter for this convention (Battle Creek) and of the chapter for next convention (Traverse City). He also identified two hotel representatives that were present: Patti, who was his liaison with the hotel, and Kelly, who was his liaison for catering services.

Jerry announced that Roger Lewis would be taking over his MT Events role beginning 12/31/12. It was noted that convention venues and contracts have been established for all of the District's conventions through 2016, plus one in 2018. Recommended dates for 2017 have not yet been provided by the Society.

Jerry expressed his opinion that the food was good. In particular, the breakfast meals were hot, the service was good, and the pre-pay option was very helpful. It was noted that the ice cream social probably could have been scheduled earlier in the evening on Saturday night because of the early finish of activities.

It was noted that the bell stations were swamped on Friday night.

Another problem was the location of the church service in the Branson Ballroom where the air conditioning unit was quite noisy.

Finally, there was a problem noted with a lack of signage to direct people to the ice machines.

Ron Eubank reported that, despite instructions, the judges' rooms got moved. He emphasized that this cannot happen! It was concluded the problem occurred because Roger's sheets hadn't gotten to the front desk.

Appreciation was expressed for the good help from the hotel's maintenance staff.

Regret was expressed that food service at J.W. Barleycorn was not offered between 2:00 p.m. and 3:00 p.m. on Saturday, since this was a time when most attendees were on a tight schedule.

Football fans at the convention were dismayed that the TV service in the rooms did not include the Big Ten network!

The good security that was maintained in the Barbershop Shop was greatly appreciated.

3. Registrations:

(Because of the absence of the Battle Creek representative who handled this area, this topic was postponed.)

4. Auditorium:

Several problems were noted with the usage of the Kellogg auditorium. The first one was the issue of chapters with handicapped members. Chapters must be advised to report if they have anyone in this category. That will allow them to be assigned to warm-up rooms that are NOT on the second floor. (Info on handicapped members should be given to Ron Eubank.)

4. Auditorium (cont.):

Chapters should also be prompted to tell Ron if they have members with dual memberships who are planning to sing with more than one chorus. (Instances were cited of chapters who knew they had those circumstances, but had planned ahead to adapt to the situations.)

It was suggested that Senior's quartets be assigned to warm-up rooms on the first floor.

It was reported that Don Kill had a trainee with him at this convention to learn the procedures for managing the backstage activities.

Since the school associated with the Kellogg facility is now closed, it was discovered that the restrooms on the second floor were not operational. This problem had to be resolved very quickly on Friday.

Ron Eubank complimented the backstage crew as being the "best".

A correction on the convention script was recommended to limit the number of quartets that are asked to return to the backstage after the competition.

A discrepancy between the convention program and the script for Saturday evening was also reported. It was urged that the emcee be advised to check with Don Kill regarding such items.

The usage of a "director cam" was identified as a new feature this year.

In response to this feature, and other changes that may have occurred, it was suggested that we get comments from the chorus directors. It was decided that the Management Team director for CDD should do a survey of them.

It was felt that usage of the performance DVD during the coaching/evaluation sessions might be helpful.

To insure the availability of the DVD, it was suggested that options be offered for the payment for the DVD before the convention, or at the registration desk.

Because the convention program did not have enough space, the words for the national anthems had to be omitted. It was suggested that these be shown on the "big screen", or that handouts be provided. This led to a proposal that the convention program undergo a major re-design to incorporate ads, the words for the anthems, etc. Another item that could be put in a larger program would be the names of inductees to the Hall of Fame.

A request was made for better lighting of the stage during the taking of photographs. Choruses also must be advised to position themselves quicker.

It was reported that a curtain glitch occurred on one photographic occasion. Therefore, the suggestion was made that the cameraman for the photos also be put on a headset.

5. Judges Services:

It was reported that there were no major problems with transportation. A good job was done on getting all of the judges from the airports to the hotel and back. However, there were some problems with being prepared to get them transported from the hotel to the venue and back.

The Traverse City chapter was urged to have people on call to provide transportation.

It was reported that one judge had to go through the Detroit Metro airport, and this caused his airfare to be higher than normal.

5. Judges Services (cont.):

For the sound checks, the judges recommended that a stronger quartet be utilized for the microphone testing on Friday night.

(There was a comment about the "judges adjourning", but the context of this remark was lost.)

6. Harmony Foundation Raffle

The winners of the raffle were:

First prize Matt Root
Second prize: Joy Roach
Third prize: Bill Matson

7. Barbershop Shop:

The Battle Creek representative reported that it appeared that they had made a profit of around \$1968. He recommended that the shop NOT be open during the time that the registration process is being re-located to the venue. (This is a problem that is unique to this particular convention site.)

From the remarks made, it was not clear whether the host chapter had received extra items they had not ordered, or failed to get the extras they had requested.

There was a caution about ordering too much, since total sales at each convention tend to be around \$3000. Chapters that host future conventions are urged to check our sales history with Nancy Carver at Harmony Marketplace.

It was recommended that customers be told that they can order items while they are at a convention. This should be promoted!

It was suggested that sales of cookies and water be discontinued.

To overcome the inconvenience of charging sales to debit cards, it was reported that an app is now available for cell phones that will allow cards to be scanned for this purpose.

A suggestion was made that a few items be sold at the convention venue. Again, this is a situation that is unique to just a few venues like Battle Creek.

8. Joe Barbershop chorus:

The number of singers who participated was unknown. It was advocated that this activity be discussed at the Forum, and a new name be developed.

9. AIC Show:

The attendance at the show was reported to have been low. It was suggested that the show be flipped back to the hotel. The lack of a headliner act at the show was perceived as a factor for the low attendance.

10. Worship Service:

The attendance at this event was reported as being 35 persons.

11. Miscellaneous Items:

Reference was made to the problems that were experienced with the cost, the timeliness of service, and the adequacy of the food that was provided to the hospitality rooms supplied by the hotel.

11. Miscellaneous Items (cont.):

A suggestion was made that the program should list the times for evaluation sessions with quartets as "TBD".

Following up on the food problems previously noted, Doug Weaver mentioned that the food and ice for his president's reception got misdirected.

12. Planning for the Traverse City Convention:

Roger Lewis noted that Traverse City does not have a Convention & Visitors Bureau. As a result, the preparations for that convention will be a little more complicated.

It was suggested that we try again to get a "big name presenter" for the Friday evening contest.

To reduce the delays and confusion that occur when registrations are done on-site by attendees who arrive on the day of convention, it was recommended that we promote pre-registrations by the chapters. It was mentioned that the website link for on-line registrations was going to be revised to allow multiple registrations during one log-in. It was urged that training on usage of the on-line process be done at Leadership Academy---either in the Secretary or Treasurer Track sessions.

3. Registrations (return to):

The host chapter representative who handled the registration function did finally arrive. He noted that many coordination problems occurred because of the large number of last-minute, on-site registrations. He did not have a written report to give to the attendees at this meeting, and indicated that it would have to be provided later.

Three monetary amounts (\$3170, \$820, and \$990) were mentioned, but it was unclear what these numbers represented. It was reported that approximately \$5000 in registration monies had been received, but this number seemed to be too much for the number of registrations that were received. No actual registration numbers were cited.

13. Miscellaneous:

Jerry Ditto reminded everyone that all upcoming conventions were listed on the back of the minutes from the post-convention meeting held at the spring convention.

Larry Parker mentioned that a new hotel and convention facility was being built on the west side of Lansing, and could become an excellent location for future conventions.

Jim Sams, member at large on the Society board, gave a summary statement in which he complimented the District on the handling of this convention.

Before they left, representatives from the Battle Creek chapter were reminded to transfer any materials in their possession that the Traverse City chapter would need.

Jerry Ditto then declared the meeting to be adjourned. (The time was not recorded.)