

Minutes of the Pioneer District Board of Directors of SPEBSQSA, Inc.
held on April 24, 2015, in the
Custer Room # 1 of the McCamly Plaza Hotel

Attendees:

-----Members of the District Board of Directors present:

Dan Bezaire (President)
Mike Hansen (Executive vice-president) --- (late arrival)
Jim McMahan (Secretary)
Larry Parker (Treasurer) --- (late arrival)
Doug Weaver (Immediate past president, and also Director of Financial Development)
Chris Berry (Director of CDD) --- (late arrival)
Brian Dunckel (Director of C&J)
Paul Ellinger (Director of Membership) --- (late arrival)
Roger Lewis (Director of Events)
Dave Montera (Director of Music & Performance)
James O'Dell (Director of Mktg. & PR)
Mike Ridenour (Director of CSLT)
Ed Bax (Member-at-large)

-----Members of the District Board of Directors absent:

(None)

-----Guests:

Ed Bittle (Society board member-at-large)
David Calland (Harmony Foundation regional director)
Vicki Gibson (member of the management group for "The Voice Barbershop Chorus")
Aaron Pollard (director of "The Voice Barbershop Chorus")

I. Call To Order:

President Dan Bezaire began the meeting at 10:30 a.m. by asking Doug Weaver to direct the singing of "The Old Songs".

As a matter of administrative detail, it was noted that a quorum of board members was present.

II. Approval of the Agenda:

Dan Bezaire started to ask for adoption of the agenda, but the secretary pointed out an item that should be added to the New Business portion. This is a "Rockin' Barbershop" festival proposed by a member of the Muskegon chapter. **[NOTE: At the time, it was erroneously identified as coming from the Holland chapter.]**

Mike Ridenour moved that the modified agenda be approved, and Brian Dunckel made the second. **Motion approved.**

Before the meeting continued, Dan took the opportunity to identify the different persons who were present as guests. **[See listing above.]**

III. Minutes of the BOD meeting on January 18, 2015:

The minutes had been previously distributed by the District Secretary. Dave Montera moved that the minutes be approved, and James O'Dell made the second. **Motion approved.**

IV. Consent Agenda:

It was noted that the final version of the 2015 budget had been approved by an electronic vote in the intervening period since the last board meeting.

V. Report on "The Voice Barbershop Chorus" (TVBC):

Vicki Gibson indicated that her role with the group is that of an administrator and co-producer. The purpose of her remarks was to share an update on the activities of the group, and to thank the District board for its support. She then relinquished the floor to Aaron Pollard, who serves as the chorus director.

Aaron asserted that 2014 was a very successful year for the group, and added his thanks for the backing of Pioneer. He reported that 24 young men went to New Orleans, and the group received an outstanding rating and silver pins. He noted that the group has now added five new members. The group is beginning to build toward a new year. They enjoyed the experience of being at the Mid-Winter convention, and got to see the top five medalists from the last International. The chorus sang before a crowd of about a thousand people. Aaron indicated it was an honor for him to direct the group for the first time.

Aaron asked if there was to be discussion of YIH topics at this time. Dan Bezaire indicated those items would come up during the Consent Calendar portion of the meeting.

Vicki Gibson resumed with a discussion of the history of the chorus. She noted that it was started approximately 1-1/2 years earlier, but it felt like it been a lot longer. The chorus has a mission statement. It is: "To reach, teach, and equip young men in the art of four-part acapella singing in the barbershop style---culminating in participation at the fall Pioneer District convention and the BHS Mid-Winter Youth Chorus Festival." Vicki asserted that this mission statement described what the group hoped to do, and has done. She felt that the group has been very successful in its inaugural year in the achievement of its mission. She compared the beginning of the group to the movie "Field of Dreams"---a time when they decided to "build it, and they will come". She expressed thanks to long-time members of the Society within the District that helped with the building.

Vicki stated that the goal of the group is to remain as a youth chorus, and not to organize into a chapter. She did note that about 1/3 of the chorus members are also members of existing chapters. Several of them will be involved in the competitions during this convention. Specifically, she noted that they were members of the Hillsdale, Kalamazoo, Battle Creek, and Grosse Pointe chapters. Those who are doing both things love it.

Vicki spoke to the diversity represented within the group. There are many college students, high school students, and middle school students. Some of the members are no longer in school and are employed.

She described the group as being highly talented in music. Initially, she expected the group to be mostly novice high school singers. Many of them were novices in four-part harmony, but there were a few who were college and high school music students. Three of the college students are graduating seniors at MSU who are scheduled to student-teach this spring in three Michigan schools (Brighton, Haslett, and Grand Ledge). She also mentioned that her grandson was trying to teach his middle-school classmates how to sing a tag. A student teacher at his school said he knew how to do it, helped him, and then joined the chorus. Vicki felt that the chorus has, within its first year, made significant progress in reaching and teaching in the local schools.

[Arrival of Chris Berry noted.]

Since the chorus is not incorporated, Vicki noted that the group has no internal funding. In order for the group to be maintained year-round, she concluded that it must explore ways to develop a partnership with the District. She did not know if that had been done in the past, or it was common practice within other districts. She was certain that the group wants to have an on-going status, and to be in a relationship with Pioneer for funding support and other assistance that the District can provide.

V. Report on "The Voice Barbershop Chorus" (cont.):

Vicki moved on to a discussion of the costs that the group's members will incur this year. The 2015 group is expected to have a size of 25-30 members. Beginning with the Reno Mid-Winter, the upper age limit will drop to 25. Fortunately, only one existing member will be lost as a result. Most of the members are between age 19 and 21. The youngest is age 12.

The secretary asked for clarification on the drop of the age limit. It was confirmed that this change did not affect the New Orleans event. It begins with the Reno event.

Vicki anticipates that Reno will cost more for travel. Based on a membership of 30, she estimates that item will be around \$12,000.

The chorus has been fortunate to obtain a rehearsal location that is not charging them a usage fee. This is a cost the group will not have this year.

Vicki thanked the Harmony Foundation for the funding that it provided for the housing and some other costs associated with the Mid-Winter at New Orleans. It was asserted that the group did not get into any trouble at the event---or at least any of which there is any knowledge! Aaron did say that one of the guys was looking for a salon that could do his eyebrows like the girls from a Texas high school.

As an aside, Vicki commented on the recent Harmonizer announcement about Pioneer's receipt of the Gold Medal award as a supporter of the YCF. This highlight is challenging the chorus members to be "gold medal" winners at the next YCF.

One of the changes being made with the chorus this year is to get members to take more of a leadership role in the running of the chorus. This should also help them to become more viable members of chapters that they may join in the future. They should be well-trained musically, and know something about how to interact with the members of those chapters.

[Arrival of Paul Ellinger noted.]

In summary, Vicki felt that the introduction to barbershop harmony and the education in its skills that the chorus members are receiving will serve as lifeblood to the future of Pioneer. What we invest in them will keep what our existing members cherish---ringing chords and having great friendships.

Vicki was asked if the chorus has an auditioned membership. She indicated that it does not. The members are asked to make a commitment of their time because of the financial support they receive from the District and others. The group only rehearses once a month on Sunday afternoons for three hours. They do have learning CDs they can use for self-study.

Paul Ellinger asked how the group deals with persons who have difficulty matching pitch. Aaron Pollard noted that the three college seniors who are going into music education are section leaders, so they get to use their skills. They have found ways to position those with pitch-matching problems on the risers so they have the best opportunities to succeed. From this information, Paul concluded that allowing anyone to sing "trumps" scoring.

Speaking on behalf of the District members who were at New Orleans, Doug Weaver declared that the group made them very proud.

The free rehearsal location that is used by the group was identified as Trinity Lutheran church on Dunckel Road in Lansing. (Brian Dunckel pointed out that the road was named after his great, great grandfather.)

Another question was raised about the greatest distance that was traveled by any of the chorus members to get to rehearsal. At first, it was thought that a few from Hillsdale traveled the farthest. It was then decided that the members from Grosse Pointe travel farther.

V. Report on "The Voice Barbershop Chorus" (TVBC) (cont.)

Since the chorus has only had two rehearsals so far this spring, Vicki asked that chapters get the word out now to prospective participants in their areas.

The secretary observed that some boys in the Gratiot County area have wanted to participate, but needed transportation. Therefore, chapter members have been invited to help out in this way. This is a contribution that the members can make. Vicki mentioned that a member of the Grosse Pointe chapter brought up three high school boys during the previous year. She described the work of that member as being "awesome".

Vicki indicated that she had to leave immediately for a Sweet Adelines convention in Dearborn.

[Departure of Vicki Gibson noted.]

Dan Bezaire pointed out the Aaron Pollard had agreed to accept the position of Director of Youth in Harmony. The secretary recommended that his appointment be placed into the minutes with a motion. Doug Weaver moved that Aaron be so appointed. Ed Bax made the second. **Motion approved.**

VI. Finance & Budget:

(Larry Parker was not yet present, so this agenda item was deferred until later in the meeting.)

VII. Consent Calendar:

Dan Bezaire noted that there were two additions to the calendar for reports that couldn't be distributed prior to the meeting. He asked Doug Weaver to give his Financial Development report first.

Doug indicated that his report hasn't changed much over the last year, so he is looking forward to implementing some items in the next few months. As always, he is looking to retain existing donors to H/F, and to acquire new ones. He noted that David Calland visited the Hillsdale and Battle Creek chapters earlier in the week. He and David are looking for time when David can return so the two of them can visit more chapters. He noted that it has been a while since some chapters have been visited by either a H/F rep or himself. Presumably, there are new members in chapters who have never heard about the work of H/F. Doug is hopeful that some new Ambassadors of Song or Presidents Council donors can be found, or existing donors will increase their pledges. There may be A-O-S donors who choose to become P-C donors.

Doug noted that a decision must be made if Pioneer will again be a sponsor of the next Youth Chorus Festival. Pioneer has been a sponsor for the last several years. This is a commitment of \$10,000. Taking on that responsibility must be balanced with our support for TVBC---which the District has also opted to do. He admitted that this will be a tough discussion. Doug affirmed that he will work to support the process of being a YCF sponsor if that is our decision.

Finally, Doug declared that he was extremely pleased that Aaron Pollard had agreed to become the Director of YIH. Doug is looking forward to working with him.

Dan Bezaire then asked James O'Dell to give his report on Marketing & PR.

James mentioned that he was trying to standardize the position of Director of Marketing & PR so that repetitive tasks are identified. This involves creating "to-do" lists and time schedules. This document will become a template that his successor(s) could use for guidance.

He noted that he had been working with Roger Lewis to promote the current convention. He felt he had had some success working with the local Convention & Visitors Bureau, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Downtown Battle Creek Association. Press releases have been sent out to key organizations. Flyers have been placed around the community. James mentioned some promotional videos that were placed on-line and on Facebook. The CVB and C-of-C forwarded those videos to their memberships. Those groups sent out e-mail blasts to their members as well.

VII. Consent Calendar (cont.):

An announcement was scheduled to appear in the Battle Creek Shopper on the day before. James didn't know if that had occurred as planned.

The quartet "Old Rules" made a PR appearance the night before at the Griffin bar located across the street from the hotel. James heard that they did a great job.

It was noted that a reporter and photographer from the Battle Creek Inquirer would be coming that afternoon to sit in on Harry Haflett's comedy class. James gave a warning that the newspaper people might approach members for a sound bite.

James directed the board members to four thank-you cards that he was inviting them to sign. The cards will be given to the hotel and the three organizations that have helped (CVB, C-of-C, and D-B-C-A). He felt the cards would be a nice touch in support of our return to Battle Creek in a year.

The next project that James is developing is a website for non-barbershoppers where they can get info and buy tickets. He feels that such a site would be more navigable by outsiders than our District website. He noted that the District website has too much information. He invited comments from board members about the proposed design of the site. He hopes to have the site available for the fall 2015 convention.

In response to a request for other marketing support on behalf of other District activities, Dave Montera asked if anything could be developed for the Quartet Boot Camp.

Dan Bezaire invited the other board members to share further comments that needed to be added to their written reports. There were none.

VIII. Other Reports:

Dan asked Aaron Pollard to talk about his plans for the YIH function.

Aaron declared that his goal for the YIH function is the expansion of youth experiencing acapella music, barbershop, and other forms of music. He alluded to his earlier report about members of TVBC who are student teaching in three Michigan schools. He identified that he has personal connections to teachers in Harrison H.S. and Farmington H.S.

He mentioned that he had three students at MSU who plan to introduce more barbershop into their acapella activities at that location. Another connection is the director of a student acapella group at CMU who was a member of TVBC last year, but will not be able to participate this year. Aaron is acquainted with two students at WMU who have barbershop experience. He reported that an acapella group is being started at NMU. He is planning to help them by providing music and other resources.

Since Aaron attends EMU, he knew that the new director of choral education at EMU is starting a new class that is listed as a "vocal jazz/acapella/barbershop" group in the fall. Aaron mentioned that, at the start of last year (which was this new director's first year), the director posted a link to Westminster's 2010 uptune on the men's chorus page to get guys excited about that activity. Aaron was amazed when he saw the link.

The end result of these connections will be opportunities to get into these schools to provide music and other resources.

Another connection that Aaron has is through his mother. She works for Marshall Music, and thus has contact information for every music educator in the state of Michigan. Aaron is also aware of contacts that Evan Boegehold had made at different schools, so he will get together with Evan to follow up on those projects. Through all of these means, Aaron hopes to communicate awareness of barbershop and the availability of music.

VIII. Other Reports (cont.):

Doug Weaver noted that he had talked with Aaron about Novi H.S. --- a school that is scheduled to receive a packet of music from Joe Cerutti. Doug had recommended that Aaron follow up on that plan.

Roger Lewis offered a reminder that the District is providing free passes to this convention to any person with a student ID. This invitation included members of TVBC. A lot of them are expected to come on Saturday for the tag contests. Invitation cards, and an accompanying flyer, were distributed to schools as far away as Kalamazoo. Some schools eagerly accepted them.

Roger was not concerned about the number that might respond, since the Battle Creek venue seats 2400. He is anxious to see the response that we get. He felt that the distribution worked well, but thought that we could still do a better job. Roger noted that this idea was tried first at Muskegon, but the distribution did not work there like it should have. He thought it was done far better this time.

There is a desire to provide free passes for students at future conventions. Roger observed that it may be a problem to do that at Kalamazoo since that facility will only seat 900. We have a normal attendance at conventions of around 600.

Roger emphasized that we are working to get more youth involved. He noted that the acceptance at the schools has been good. He observed a lot of excitement at the schools when the distributions were made. Now the question is whether that will translate into numbers. The flyer mentions that the students are welcome at all of the sessions.

Roger mentioned that we have gotten a list of music educators in the area through our connection with the ACDA. As a continuation on the reference to the ACDA, the secretary asked about the response that we have gotten from the Michigan branch of the ACDA. He noted that most of the publicity about the BHS-ACDA partnership has been focused at the national level.

Brian Dunckel mentioned that we used to have a booth at the Michigan Music Educators conference. He knew that we had discontinued that activity. He noted that having a booth was expensive, but it was a good connection to all of the Michigan educators. It was clarified that MME is not the same group as ACDA. It was also clarified that ACDA serves Michigan through a regional organization headquartered in Chicago.

The secretary had noticed, according to the ACDA website, that Tom Blue (director of the Pontiac-Waterford chapter) is listed as having a significant role in the regional ACDA organization.

Paul Ellinger thought that he, Adam Scott, and Joe McDonald went to an ACDA conference in 2014. Doug Weaver pointed out that the event they attended was not an ACDA event, but was one hosted by another educator group. **[The name of the group could not be heard.]** Doug indicated that he also attended that event.

Brian Dunckel mentioned that he now works with a travel company that leads student tours. He was escorting a choir group from a school that is only 15 miles away from Battle Creek. They were going to NYC. After confirming that the students could come for free to the convention, he talked with the group while they were waiting to go to their performance venue and told them about barbershop. He expects that some of those students might come this weekend. (P.S. He was carrying a set of tags with him.)

Dave Montera reported that the Detroit-Oakland chorus is moving to a new rehearsal location at the Royal Oak Middle School. Consequently, the chapter contacted the school superintendent, the head of the music department, and the middle school choir teacher. The head of the music department (who is also the band director in the middle school) spent two hours walking chapter reps through the facility, and talking about the things that he wants to do with the chorus when (not if) it moves into the school. Dave felt that a very good connection had been made with the school system for future involvement of their youth in barbershop.

VIII. Other Reports (cont.):

Aaron Pollard mentioned that he was vice-president of the EMU chapter of ACDA. He offered to work on having a booth located at the ACDA convention in Chicago. This might be done jointly with the UM chapter of ACDA. He knew that the EMU choir is going on tour around the time of the convention, and will be volunteering at the event.

IX. Old Business:A. Chapter contacts:

Dan Bezaire noted that the list of assignments is still current. He admitted that he recently missed an opportunity to visit one of the chapters for which he has responsibility.

B. Troubadour:

Dan urged the District officers to give info periodically to John Cowlshaw about activities in their area of responsibility. Info can also be sent to Tom Ennis.

C. Policy Manual:

Dan mentioned that Doran McTaggart had expressed a concern that the manual defines the amount given at the Pioneer Sendoff by the District to a chorus going to International at \$50 per man. It was noted at the last BOD meeting that the figure was derived from a time when \$50 was the registration fee. Registrations currently run around \$200.

Dan also found a formula that was defined for the money from the Sendoff. It divides the total dollars raised at the Sendoff by a number that is the sum of the chorus and quartet members and the number 8. He determined that the formula gives one share to each chorus member and two shares to each quartet member. He didn't know if that formula was being followed. Brian Dunckel believed it was.

It was noted that the manual still calls for the \$50/man figure. Brian asserted that the District has not been following the manual, but has used a flat fee of \$4000---which usually doesn't equal \$50 each for most choruses.

Roger Lewis gave a historical perspective of the District's contribution. The \$50/man figure was originally a budgeted item. When the Battle Creek chapter began hosting Sendoff events in the 1970s, the money raised then was considered to be contributions over-and-above what the District gave. The formula that Dan had mentioned earlier was used to allocate those monies. When Windsor took over the Sendoff, that system was supposed to continue. Roger observed that everything then got mashed together.

Roger wasn't sure if the current budget has specific amounts defined for chorus and quartet contributions. He did not want International competitors to be dependent totally on Sendoff monies. Brian Dunckel verified that the budget did contain \$3000 for this expense.

Another item that is mentioned in the policy manual is election of officers. Dan Bezaire was reminded by that item that a report from the Nominating Committee must be scheduled for next convention. The Committee must be chaired by the Immediate Past President, and its members are the District President, the Executive Vice-President, and three other persons selected by the DP.

The secretary asked for confirmation that the officers elected at the fall convention would take over as of January 1, 2016. He also asked if this was an appropriate time to add members-at-large to the BOD. It was noted that some names have been proposed in the past as viable candidates for this position. Doug Weaver observed that some of our previous MALs have moved into other board positions. The secretary concurred by observing that we have tended to "chew up" our reserve of MALs. Ed Bax is the only survivor from our last round of appointments.

IX. Old Business (cont.):C. Policy Manual (cont.):

Doug Weaver recalled that we had attempted to have three MALs serving on the board. Since we have lost two of the previous MALs through advancement into other roles, he concluded that the Nominating Committee would be looking for two persons to add in this capacity.

Brian Dunckel returned to the topic of District support of International competitors. Based on the \$3000 that is budgeted, he had determined that amount would equal a minimum of \$50/man for a 60-man chorus ----and he knew we have not sent any choruses that large in many years. He concluded that the District's support is more than \$50/man.

[Arrival of Larry Parker noted.]D. Basecamp:

Dan Bezaire noted that the program is working quite well, but some board members are not on it. For Aaron Pollard's benefit, Dan explained that it is a project management software program that the Society is underwriting. Chris Berry is in charge of the program, and can explain it to anyone who wants to use it. The secretary observed that it is simple to use **IF** you have the right software in your computer. This is the dilemma currently faced by the secretary.

Dave Montera asked Chris if he was the only person who can add projects to Basecamp. Dave had attempted to add a project that morning, and got a message to talk to the system administrator.

Dan Bezaire noted that he was able to go into the "Standing Ovation" project. However, Dave mentioned that particular project was already there. Chris indicated he would check on this detail.

[Arrival of Mike Hansen noted.]E. Support for Youth Chorus Festival:

Doug Weaver requested the opportunity to speak to this topic. As he had previously noted, the District has been a YCF sponsor for the last four years. He felt it was very exciting in New Orleans to have four sponsors from Pioneer at that event. He mentioned the great honor it was to have the one sponsorship on behalf of Paul Teska. That one, of course, will not be repeated. Another one of the four will also not be repeated. Now we are down to deciding if the District can take on a commitment again.

Doug recalled that the District received around \$7000 in the Parade-of-Checks. Assuming this happens again, the District would be committed to making up any difference.

He also noted that the District was very fortunate not to have to give any direct support to TVBC last year because of unexpected donations. The group was fully covered. It is uncertain if that will happen again. Doug emphasized that he was not proposing that we not provide support to TVBC. He was merely pointing out the potential commitments that we could be making.

Doug reiterated that he will do everything he can to help raise money for a YCF sponsorship if the board decides to be a sponsor.

Aaron Pollard mentioned that TVBC will be receiving some income from a show appearance on Saturday, November 7. The group is also preparing a sheet where individuals can choose to sponsor one of the group's members. The sheet will also be given to each of the members so they can also seek assistance. He noted that the group's members are not required to pay anything, but they can get support from family members. He observed that the one member who aged out at the end of the year was employed, and had the capability to provide a lot for himself. Members might invite contributions to their Reno trip in lieu of receiving a birthday gift. The ultimate goal is to make the next Mid-Winter trip less of a burden for each attendee.

IX. Old Business (cont.):E. Support for Youth Chorus Festival (cont):

The secretary asked for verification of the date when TVBC was appearing on a show. Upon learning the precise date, he noted that the Mt. Pleasant chapter had been looking at asking the group to be on its show on that same night.

Dan Bezaire asked if we were ready to make a commitment to a YCF sponsorship at this time. Dave Montera concluded that it would be a commitment in abstract to support TVBC because we don't know what kind of funding TVBC will be receiving from other sources.

Dan pointed out that the question was about YCF sponsorship, and not TVBC support.

When it was indicated that we were considering adding a \$10,000 commitment to the budget, Larry Parker declared his opposition. Paul Ellinger wanted Larry's input since Paul personally favored sponsorship. However, he was concerned about the priority of items in the budget. If a sponsorship is accepted, he wondered what other things in the budget would have to go by the wayside.

Larry observed that as we continue to ask chapters to donate in the Parade-of-Checks, the donations get smaller. Mike Hansen added that chapter funds are becoming more limited each year. It is getting more difficult to raise the same amount of money as was done in the past, and membership may also be aging.

Larry confirmed that there is no line item currently in the budget for this item. Mike then asked what we would have to cut from the budget in order to put in \$10,000. Doug Weaver pointed out that we would not be spending \$10,000, but the difference between \$10,000 and the amount received in the Parade-of-Checks. There was uncertain recollection of what that amount was in 2014. Larry recalled that he had written a check that was around \$3000. Again, it was noted that there is nothing in the 2015 budget.

Doug Weaver reiterated that the District would not be spending \$10,000. It would be some figure below that---probably around \$3000. Doug perceived that his job would be to see that number be as low as possible. He was optimistic that we might be able to get it down to zero sometime. He asked if we wanted to commit \$3000-4000 to this objective.

The secretary noted that a decision to do this would require an amendment of the budget.

Roger Lewis asked if we needed to make this decision now, or could it wait until later. Brian Dunckel answered the first question with a "no", but knew that the H/F staff would feel more comfortable if we did it now. He observed several items on the agenda for this meeting that could cost additional money---like the groups going to International, the Rockin' Barbershop event, and TVBC. He observed that they are all good things we have supported in the past. The key is to make these things happen. Each board member will have to tell the story of the progress that is being made by TVBC, and how it is affecting lives.

Paul Ellinger recalled there was a time when the District was operating in the red. He did want to see it return to that condition again. At the same time, he would like to see us do all of the things being presented, and yet be fiscally responsible. He was hoping that we would not return to saying "no" to everything. He proposed the development of a list that prioritized our opportunities. He noted that if we allow "history to repeat itself", we are of no good to anybody.

Mike Hansen observed that a budget is a list of priorities, and this item was not high on that list when it was developed. Ed Bax noted that while the actual cost may only be \$3000, it is an amount that must be cut from something else, or new money sources must be found. It was pointed out that dues and convention fees were just increased last year, so that is not an option.

Dan Bezaire proposed that this question be deferred until the fall board meeting. In the meantime, Doug will have an opportunity to do some fund-raising and coaxing.

IX. Old Business (cont.):E. Support for Youth Chorus Festival (cont):

Roger Lewis pointed out that we will know better in the fall how TVBC stands in their fund-raising, and how much more assistance they will need.

F. Upper Yoopers chorus update:

Dan Bezaire reported that the chapter being developed in Marquette (the Upper Yoopers chorus) had just received its license to operate. This is the first step for them as they move towards being chartered. He mentioned that the director of the chorus (Peter Stephens-Brown) will be coming to the convention, but will not arrive in time for the HOD meeting. Delegates at the HOD will be encouraged to talk to him during the weekend. Dan mentioned that the chapter is having a singing competition event one week from now.

The secretary suggested that the status of the developing chapter be announced during the convention.

G. EZDues program:

Dan referred to the availability now of an on-line means for potential new members to sign up for this dues payment program. He had heard there were some glitches with the system. The secretary was not aware of any problems, so he asked for feedback about any that are encountered.

The secretary has been urging new members to sign up for the program because it is a good deal financially for the individual (50% savings their first year), and a good deal for the Society since dues can be renewed automatically through a credit or debit card.

[In reference to the earlier discussion about support of the Youth Chorus Festival, Larry Parker noted that the District received \$7100 in the 2014 Parade-of-Checks, and only paid out \$2900.]

VI. Finance & Budget (item previously deferred):

Larry Parker first referred to the report that he had sent out electronically. He noted that since that report, he had made a deposit two days earlier on April 22. Therefore, the District's assets were currently at \$74,635.60. This included \$10,907.34 in the Flagstar account, \$26,172.13 in the savings account, \$7933.80 in the Comerica checking account, \$3600.42 in the QCA checking account, and \$26,021.91 in the Security Benefits savings account.

He pointed out that the expense reports he had sent out represent a new system. It is still a QuickBooks system, but it is a new edition designed for nonprofits. Everything has a category number. All of the 40000 numbers are income, and all of the 50000 numbers are expenses. When new budget items surface, he must tweak the categories to add new numbers. A recent example was the money received back from H/F for the donations made by District members.

Paul Ellinger asked for a comparison of current total assets to what they have been previously. Larry observed that the District balance was around \$96,000 when he took over as District Treasurer a few years earlier. He noted that we have been running lots of functions that cost money, but don't generate much income. He described the current situation as deficit spending.

Larry expects that the current convention will bring the balance up close to \$80,000, but noted that there will be lots of bills---like those for the hotel, the auditorium, and expenses for District officers and staff.

Mike Ridenour asked if the current convention will produce a profit. Larry observed that the convention was \$9560.65 in the black as of April 23. However, bills for the hotel (\$3000-4000) or the auditorium (\$4500) are yet to be paid. We will receive additional income, however, from on-site registrations.

VI. Finance & Budget (item previously deferred) (cont.):

Larry indicated that a little over \$15,000 had been received from pre-registrations and late registrations. He was asked how that number compared to the last spring convention. Initially, he gave a figure of \$17,931.72. It was then clarified that was the expenses figure for that convention. The next figure cited was more relevant to the question. The total income for that convention was \$17,323.56. It was assumed that the two conventions will be comparable. Larry identified that the last spring convention had a net deficit of around \$600.

Paul Ellinger observed that our conventions used to be income-makers. Dan Bezaire observed that some districts have found it necessary to go to just one convention per year.

Mike Hansen wondered if we had ever thought about getting a sponsor---like a bank, or musical organizations like publishing houses. He then noted that such sponsorships might create complications. Another thought he had was to get local organizations---like foundations---to be sponsors. Larry Parker questioned whether a foundation in one city would be willing to a sponsor for an event that might be held in another city.

Doug Weaver proposed that the idea be explored, but look for foundations in the communities where the conventions will be held. He suggested that even small donations would be helpful in those situations. Mike Hansen observed that we might only have to allow banners to be posted at an event. Ads might also be placed in the convention program. The end result would be to cushion the bottom line of the conventions finances.

Dave Montera pointed out that donations from foundations usually involve grant requests. Mike wasn't sure that we should go that far. He proposed that a standard letter be created. The local chapter could identify possible businesses or individuals to whom it could be sent.

Dave Montera observed that most chapters put ads into their show programs. He suggested that we create a new style of convention program that would be similar to a show program, and could contain ads. Quartets could also place ads in that program. Mike Hansen urged that local restaurants and bars be considered as a source of ads with coupons. Brian Dunckel recalled that idea had been previously proposed, but with the stipulation that a local chapter would seek the ads and get some of the ad income

If we want to consider going for grants, Paul Ellinger mentioned that Dwayne Cooper in the Austin (TX) chapter has offered to help anyone in the Society with the writing of grants. It was mentioned that Dwayne is the Society treasurer.

Mike Hansen offered to work with the host chapter on the concept of getting sponsors or ads for the next convention. He advocated that we consider moving away from the standard program format that has been used for a long time. Doug Weaver noted that the idea of a different format has been discussed many times, but got stalled because of a lack of someone with the skills to do it.

The secretary pointed out that the existing program format is at full capacity for containing info. Because of last minute additions to the program for this convention, some of the text had to be squeezed to make everything fit. If we want to add more, we must change the format. Dave Montera emphasized that the existing format would not allow for insertion of ads. He did observe that selection of black-and-white printing, three-color printing, or full-color printing would determine the prices that would be placed on ads. Mike Ridenour suggested that development of a new format go in stages. He urged beginning with a basic change, and then that we build upon the concept with time as the size increases.

Brian Dunckel said that some districts have created more elaborate programs. Mike Ridenour asked Brian if he had any examples that could be examined. Brian thought he did, but if not, he was sure that Dan Bezaire could get some through the DP Council. Doug Weaver asked Roger Lewis if he had any from conventions where he had served as a judge.

Roger noted that chapters are often reluctant to get ads for something like this because it can take away from their income for their regular show programs. It means they must hit local resources twice.

VI. Finance & Budget (item previously deferred) (cont.):

Mike Ridenour complimented Roger on his promotion of local events at the Muskegon convention. He was optimistic, therefore, that we could approach only restaurants, bars, car rental firms, etc. that deal in usable commodities. He was certain that the local chapter would still have to be the contact group to do these kinds of sales. He liked Brian's suggestion to give the chapters a cut from those sales.

In passing, Larry Parker mentioned that \$4100 was spent in ordinary expenses for this convention.

Ed Bittle shared a caution about putting coupons to restaurants in a program. He noted that the Des Moines (IA) chapter did that, but forgot about the pressure that the Saturday afternoon schedule puts on the time when coupons might be used. Consequently, no coupons were used. This had a negative impact on the selling of ads at the chapter's next show.

There was a reminder that the next convention will be at Kalamazoo, but that Hillsdale is the host chapter. Any sales of ads would have to be done by members of the Kalamazoo group.

X. New Business (return to agenda):A. Financial Filings:

Dan Bezaire mentioned that the district secretaries have discovered that they can find out if their chapters have filed ("archived") their financial documents with the Society, but cannot determine what has been filed. The individual who personally files a document is the only person who can look at it. There can be a possibility that "garbage" has been filed. The secretary gave an example of one Pioneer chapter that submitted its 990 document for 2014 in the middle of 2014! This was obviously an invalid document.

Another problem that the secretary is experiencing is chapters may believe that the process is too difficult, and ask for it to be done for them. It was strongly asserted that this would not happen. Training in the process will be provided, but not performance of the actual task.

Dan Bezaire lamented that our district was at the bottom of the list in filing compliance last year.

Roger Lewis asked if a list of the chapters who were delinquent on their filings could be given to board members. The secretary noted that he gets a quarterly 46-page report from Don Fuson. One page of that report lists all of the Pioneer chapters. The secretary has observed that the report is hard to understand, and sometimes inaccurate.

The secretary is convinced the only way to get accurate info on filings is to look at the State of Michigan and IRS websites to see if documents exist in those locations, and then compare that data with the listings on the chapter webpages in .ebiz.

The secretary was willing to send board members a copy of the Pioneer page in the report from Don Fuson. He indicated, however, that the document should be read with caution. Doug Weaver asserted that any information would be useful. If a chapter appears to not be in compliance, at least the question "Why not?" can be asked.

There was a suggestion that board members get a list of everyone who is delinquent. That would be essentially the whole page. The secretary noted that only five Pioneer chapters were in total compliance in 2014.

Dave Montera offered to co-develop, with the secretary, a document to provide assistance to chapter secretaries in explaining the filing process. These officers need to know of the resources that are available. Dave concurred that some chapters like his are very familiar with the process, but others are not. He felt that a joint effort from the district secretary and Dave (as the legal counsel for the District) might be beneficial.

X. New Business (return to agenda) (cont.):A. Financial Filings (cont.):

Brian Dunckel wondered if this topic might be covered in a class at the fall convention. The secretary emphasized that it is covered during the Secretary Track class at Leadership Academy.

As an aside, the secretary mentioned that a chapter in the Central States District had been filing its 990 for four years using the EIN of the Society, and not of the chapter. Consequently, the chapter has lost its status as a 501(c)(3) organization and must reapply!

Doug Weaver proposed that the class be offered in the fall. Then, any chapters with any non-filings on their record could be contacted and advised to send a representative to the class. They need to be told about the things they must do to protect their legal status. Brian Dunckel added the thought that such a class should be offered at the next two conventions, but then be sure to do it at each spring convention prior to the May 15 deadline for two of the documents.

Paul Ellinger advanced the concept of using our list of phone contacts for the chapters to encourage them to get this task done. He felt that phone calls would increase our chances of getting the message communicated.

Mike Ridenour noted that we spend a lot of time talking about this issue at various meetings and at Leadership Academy. It is not like this is something new. Dan Bezaire concurred that the topic will be mentioned again at the HOD meeting later in the day. Doug Weaver commented that we must send a strong message that failure to handle this process can result in a chapter losing its charter. Maybe, that will cause someone to wake up. Brian Dunckel noted that, if only five chapters submitted reports in 2014, there were 20+ who did not.

Larry Parker pointed out that the chapter treasurer is responsible for the development of two of the reports that are to be archived. The secretary agreed, but observed that in many chapters, the chapter secretary does the submittals to the Society. In some chapters, however, that task is being done by the chapter treasurer. The secretary is concerned that the paperwork for the Windsor chapter is being done by a law firm, but doesn't know if the firm is also doing the archiving.

Mike Ridenour reminded everyone of a suggestion that has been made to require chapters to have evidence that these documents have been submitted in order to qualify to compete. This raises a scary prospect of having only a handful of choruses at a convention.

Doug Weaver offered an idea that chapters be given a year (two more conventions) in which to get their archivings up to date. If they fail to get it done by then, they would be notified of their ineligibility to participate. Paul Ellinger observed that one must be careful what you seek, because some chapters may not want to come anyway. The secretary added that several of the chapters who have not submitted documents are chapters we never see.

Dave Montera concluded that we must offer a carrot and not a stick. He felt our challenge as a board is to find the carrot. Paul Ellinger thought the carrot might be something as simple as "filling up the thermometer" on compliance.

[NOTE: The topic of insurance was listed as the next agenda item, but was listed twice. It was covered later as Item X.D.]

B. Rockin' Barbershop:

The night before this meeting, Dan Bezaire received a request for support of a one-day youth festival in conjunction with the fall convention. The document described all kinds of things that were planned, but Dan couldn't determine what was being sought from the District. There was a footnote to the document that said "national contributes for each student or teacher that attends". Presumably, this is a reference to Harmony Foundation. It was noted an application must be made for that to happen.

X. New Business (return to agenda) (cont.):B. Rockin' Barbershop (cont.):

Brian Dunckel discovered in later pages of the document a request for a total of \$1500-\$4000. That included amounts for music (\$400), teaching staff, and advertising. The proposal called for the bringing in of two teaching quartets.

Roger Lewis observed that the deadline for a grant application to H/F was the end of the current month. David Calland pointed out that the application could be done on-line immediately, and it would be considered if received by 5:00 p.m. on April 30. He noted that there is a \$1500 grant that could be a "shoo-in" for events like this. Other grant categories would allow requests for more money.

From his experience with the Harmony Explosion camps and workshops that the Mt. Pleasant chapter has organized, the secretary knew that grants won't cover the full cost of such events. There must be additional sources of income such as sale of show tickets, and donations from individuals and foundations to assist with registration fees, etc.

David Calland clarified that the issuance of grant money comes from the Society, even though the funding is from H/F. The Society establishes the rules for grant consideration. Marty Monson has emphasized that events should seek to become self-sustaining. Chapters should learn to find other sources of support from within their communities. The goal is to help chapters to become more savvy and professional in the funding process.

Ed Bittle noted that David's remarks will cover part of his later report. He observed that this project could be a candidate for a Vision grant. The grant application would have to be completed by the end of the month, and it does take some time to put together. He suggested that an application should never look like "the term paper that you wrote before". He did assert that 80% of this particular event could be covered by a Vision grant.

Dan Bezaire reported that he had gotten an e-mail that someone (Nels Carlsen-?) would talk to him about the event.

Ed Bittle pointed out that applications for two grants were requested in the last cycle from within Pioneer [**N.B., the Mt. Pleasant chapter**] and approved.

Dan wasn't sure that we could do anything with the proposal for now, since a grant request had not been generated. However, Ed Bittle indicated that the document received for this meeting could serve as the case statement for a Vision grant. As that is needed now is the on-line paperwork.

Doug Weaver suggested that Nels Carlsen should talk with the person(s) within Pioneer who wrote the previous successful grant applications. Ed Bittle also volunteered to talk with Nels about how to do this task.

Brian Dunckel spotted that the proposal called for the youth choruses to sing for 30 minutes. He was concerned that this could push our 6:30 p.m. start time on Saturday night back to 6:00 p.m. Roger Lewis wondered if the 6:30 p.m. slot could be assigned to the youth groups, but Brian felt that would still require some restructuring.

Ever since he saw this proposal, Roger Lewis had been envisioning the facilities at Kalamazoo. He recognized that space at the Radisson must be available for competing choruses and quartets. He had looked at the idea of assigning everything on the lower level that is the left of the escalators to barbershoppers. Meanwhile, everything to the right would be assigned to the youth---or vice versa.

The large Meadows room---on the right side---is usually the location for chorus photos. A way to deal with that issue would be to repeat this weekend's process of taking photos on stage. That would not be as convenient at Kalamazoo because the venue is not a ballroom with a raised stage in front of a slanted auditorium.

X. New Business (return to agenda) (cont.):B. Rockin' Barbershop (cont.):

He had concluded that this activity could be done at Kalamazoo, but it would be a lot easier to do in the school facilities at Battle Creek. He also noted it would be easier to do at the spring convention in Grand Rapids because that location is a school. No matter where it is held, he felt we'd make it work.

Roger commented on the youth work that Del Jarvis has done in the Sunshine and LOL Districts. He also was complimentary of the efforts of Gene Cokecroft in organizing a youth festival in Miami. Both of these persons have been contacted by Nels Carlsen about supporting this festival, and they are interested. Roger considered this activity to be important footwork that probably has not been included in any budgeting. Roger knew that Nels had been thinking about the project for six months, but hadn't seen anything until this proposal surfaced the night before.

Roger was sure that if we want to make the festival happen because it looks good, we will find a way to do it. It is definitely a first---the combining of a youth festival with a district convention. If 300-400 students attend, they will be in the audience on Saturday night. They will get great exposure to hearing barbershop and singing barbershop.

Dan Bezaire returned to the issue that he was still not sure what financial support the District was being asked to provide.

Ed Bittle observed that an event of this magnitude would take a lot of coordination with the venue. With only a week left in which to make a grant application, he wondered if the festival should be delayed until the spring convention. He also noted that a lot of communication will be needed with the music educators in the community where the convention will be held. He knew that most of them have already made decisions about what they will be doing this fall and next spring. He pointed out that his observations were based upon his experience with similar events in Des Moines. He had found then that conversations with music educators in the summer were too late for anything scheduled in the fall. He also felt that the grant process was being started a little too late for this event.

Doug Weaver concluded that the board can't do anything with this proposal until Nels has applied for a grant. Paul Ellinger agreed with Dan that nothing financially is being asked of the District. James O'Dell perceived that the document is a request for permission to hold the festival in conjunction with a convention; it is a logistics issue.

The secretary referred to the three reasons that were given by Ed Bittle why the upcoming fall convention would not be good timing.

Aaron Pollard wondered how the festival would line up with the convention activities. In conjunction with the all-day festival, there would be activities that might involve members of quartets and choruses that are competing. He cited himself as an example. Dan Bezaire agreed that there are a lot of unanswered questions to this whole project.

C. Senior's Chorus:

Dan reported that this concept came from the DP Council. This would be a new event at the Mid-Winter convention---a senior's chorus competition. The choruses would compete as part of the regular chorus competitions at district fall conventions. The top five choruses (scoring-wise) from throughout the Society would be invited to come to the Mid-Winter event.

The only rule is that everyone in the choruses must be 55 or older---including any support staff. The choruses can be either subsets of existing chapters, or they could be drawn from membership across a district. Conceivably, a chorus could compete at the convention, and its members who are 55 and older could come back later to compete again.

Dan mentioned that Doug Smeltz, one of the guest judges at this convention, is quite knowledgeable about the concept. Doug is working to get the program going.

X. New Business (return to agenda) (cont.):C. Senior's Chorus (cont.):

Dan envisioned that a requirement that everyone (including support staff) be 55 or older would probably result in this being done on a district-wide basis. Paul Ellinger observed that we could learn a lot from TVBC on how to organize.

Dave Montera asked for confirmation that the plan is to limit the choruses who go to the Mid-Winter would be the top 5 (scoring-wise) across the entire Society. Dan observed that if only five choruses get developed, those five are guaranteed to go.

Doug Weaver jokingly proposed that our District become a Senior Chorus Festival sponsor!

Dan mentioned that he will also describe this concept at the HOD meeting.

D. Insurance:

Dan reported that the DP Council is trying to clarify various aspects of the Society's coverage. There are not any changes planned in the coverage. The goal is to make the language easier to understand.

The secretary did emphasize that there is one important change in the insurance program. In the past, there was a generic third-party liability policy that covered all chapter activities automatically. Now, coverage must be requested every time for the venue(s) where a chapter is holding a show or other event. This is true even if the venue has been used constantly in the past.

The secretary cited his experience with facilities that have hosted chapter shows for years, and have never worried about coverage. They implicitly knew that they were covered. Now, they are only covered if the coverage is requested.

Dave Montera had discovered that the application for coverage asks for an event date. However, since he needed to arrange coverage for his chapter's usage of a school for its rehearsals, he found it was possible to list multiple dates. He was able to list dates generically for rehearsal nights, board meeting nights, and music team meeting nights.

Ed Bittle chose to speak further to this topic. He reinforced Dave's finding about using multiple dates on the application form. Another issue that he mentioned was the presence of volunteers (non-members) on the stage during a show. This was the issue of which the secretary spoke. There is a need to add a rider to the coverage on the insurance so that those persons are included. He gave the example of a Sweet Adelines quartet that might be a guest on a chapter show. The rider adds \$50 to the cost of the insurance.

The secretary observed that chapters have two types of coverage on their activities. The insurance being discussed here is third-party coverage. The change that has occurred is that persons who are on stage are not included as third-parties unless the rider is obtained. There is a second type of coverage that extends to all chapter members. No changes are known to have occurred in this coverage.

Ed Bittle believes there a lot of confusion about the third-party coverage. He noted that one Society board had compared the situation to an individual who had someone riding in his car would need to get special coverage. Ed has advocated that the Society get an insurance consultant to review the whole coverage. He felt the current situation could be a trap for an unwary chapter. He thought that the current info on the Society website was not clear. He had heard comments in the Rocky Mountain District that proposed that the Society's insurance coverage be increased---even if it costs a little more.

He reported that another insurance related issue that has occurred was the surprises that chapters experience when they get the bill for the new chapter member coverage, or find that they must get the third-party rider to cover non-members.

X. New Business (return to agenda) (cont.)D. Insurance (cont.):

Larry Parker asked why it takes so long to get a third-party certificate for a specific event, and also why he never gets a certificate for the member coverage. Ed was surprised that chapters do not get the latter.

Dave Montera noted that it took him three days of e-mails to get the language established for a third-party certificate for the move of his chapter to its new rehearsal/meeting location. However, he did observe that he received the final document the next day.

Ed Bittle asked the board members to let him know about problems they encounter in the process of getting third-party certificates.

Larry Parker also asked about who is to teach the Sexual Molestation Prevention Training program. The secretary was able to address the question by noting the only persons who must receive this training are those who are actively working with youth in camps and workshops.

There was an old requirement that called for the training to be given to everyone in a chapter that had youth members. That has been terminated. The secretary commented that he did take the entire membership of the Gratiot County chapter through the program. With the termination of the old requirement, the only people who must take the training are those who manage Harmony Explosion camps and workshops, or specific one-on-one youth activities.

The SMPT program doesn't apply if a boy merely walks into a chapter and becomes active. The secretary noted that he had received this guidance from Joe Cerutti.

E. Forum:

Dan Bezaire reported that the 2015 event is scheduled for November 13-14. It will be held at Belmont University in Nashville. He noted that all future Forums will be held there, and the attendees will be the DP, the EVP, the DS, the DT, and two future leaders.

F. Basecamp (extra item):

Chris Berry reported that the Basecamp for our District has maxed out at 20 projects. He has reported that situation to the Society, and asked how we can get authorization for more projects.

XI. Harmony Foundation report:

David Calland indicated that he has two items to share. He thought that we might know about one of them from the most recent edition of the Harmonizer. This is the fact that our District received a designation as a Gold Medal winner in its giving to Harmony Foundation. Last year (2013), we gave \$120,310. This calculates out to \$121.28 per man. This year we are at \$198,183, or \$224.16 per man. He felt this was absolutely wonderful because it enabled the Foundation to do so much.

David noted that some imperative things are happening in the Society's strategic partnerships. He cited specifically the connection to the Hal Leonard Corporation's "It's The Music" campaign. Since this firm began publishing the Society's top 100 arrangements throughout the world, sales have increased by 226%. He asserted that we are getting more music in people's hands than we have ever done before.

The connection to the ACDA is another strategic partnership. David referred to the coverage of the ACDA national convention that involved "Crossroads" and the "Fairfield Four".

At the recent convention of the ACDA, Dr. Tim Sharp (executive director of ACDA) mentioned the Society as a strategic partner with their organization. David was impressed by the fact that a professional music organization would mention the Society in that context.

XI. Harmony Foundation report (cont.):

David declared that our partnership with the ACDA “speaks volumes” to the work Marty Monson is doing with professional organizations.

David observed that Harmony University is exploding with regard to registrations. The last issue of the Harmonizer reported that the number has gone over 600. Another change has occurred in the H/U scholarships being provided from donors. In 2014, the total was \$53,000. For 2015, the figure has gone over \$70,000.

In 2011 there were two non-barbershop-connected music educators at H/U. David had both of them in his H/U class. At the end of the week, they told him that H/U was the best post-graduate educational experience they had ever had.

David mentioned that H/U in 2015 was going to be tremendously different in a good way. Donny Rose has come on as the event organizer, and he is using educational “best practices” for development of the curriculum. David felt the curriculum was going to be “stellar”.

He returned to his comments about music educators. He noted that two attended in 2011, nine the next year, and then eleven in 2013. In 2014 there were 23. This year there will be over 70. The impact on these attendees should be phenomenal. Hopefully, they will get fired up on barbershop and go back to introduce hundreds of youth to the style.

Paul Ellinger made reference to a recent e-mail from Donny Rose that mentioned all of the foreign countries that will be represented at this H/U.

David moved on to discuss the grant program that the Society administers for H/F. He noted that there were 78 grants issued last year over the period of two windows (fall and spring). There were over 104 grants given out within the fall 2014 window. The spring 2015 window will be closing a week after this convention. As a result of these grants, David anticipated that more people will be singing barbershop than ever before.

David reported that there just over 10,000 youth who attended Harmony Explosion camps and workshops last year. Marty Monson has estimated that the 2015 attendance will be in the 14,000-15,000 range.

It was mentioned that the latest version of the Membership Application has a place where it can be determined if the applicant was ever involved in a H-Ex camp or workshop. This should be a great way to get data and see if it trends upward.

David concluded his remarks by extending a thank you to Pioneer for its continued giving involvement. The contributions from the District and its chapters this past year were just over \$15,000. Over \$5100 of that amount was sent back to the District and its chapters.

He noted that Pioneer and five other districts have been long-time sponsors of the Youth Chorus Festival. He added that H/F has come to count on Pioneer to continue to be a part of that effort. David made an offer to Doug Weaver to assist him in any way possible to bolster implementation of a Parade-of-Checks in the fall. He indicated that he was working with the LOL District in a similar fashion.

David asserted that money being raised today represents the most important dollars in the history of the Society. He described the time right now as being a pivotal moment. He felt the current events will set the Society on a track for growth, and that barbershop will live and thrive. He anticipated that we will be having an impact on more lives. We will be changing lives, and making sure that people of all ages will have the opportunity to express themselves in singing, and enjoy the music and camaraderie we have.

[Departure of Brian Dunckel noted.]

XII. Society board member report:

Ed Bittle noted that Roger Lewis had graciously advised him that this was his first trip as a liaison member from the Society board. Ed admitted that he was surprised that he was chosen for the board position from the slate of three candidates being considered. This visit to Pioneer is truly his first visit to a district in his new capacity. He was looking forward to getting acquainted with people in Pioneer.

Ed identified his Michigan connections. He attended law school at U of M. His wife is originally from Michigan, and was in fact visiting friends in Kalamazoo during the weekend. Finally, he mentioned that he worked two summers at the Belvedere Club in Charlevoix.

Since he had made previous remarks about insurance concerns, he omitted repeating his planned discussion of that topic.

Ed has been involved with the Basecamp program being used in the Rocky Mountain District, so he has some familiarity with it. He wants to learn more about the Pioneer version of this program. He has been involved in several RMD Basecamp projects. Because of that connection, he gets messages from RMD members about complaints about Society actions that are being discussed in other RMD Basecamp projects. Ed asked Pioneer members to share info with him about problems that come to their attention. He asserted that Marty Monson wants to get feedback about what is happening, and that feedback can be filtered back through Ed.

He commented that he thought it was great that Pioneer has a music educator on its board. **[N.B. To whom was he referring?]** He mentioned that he used to be the VP of YIH of the board of the Des Moines chapter. That position has now been renamed as VP of Community Outreach. That new designation created problems with ebiz when the chapter tried to report its new officers. However, it was pointed out that change was a recommendation developed at the last Forum. He felt that knowing what the music educators in a community need, when they are scheduling things, and what they can do, is very important.

Ed observed that, through the connections his Des Moines chapter has, it will be sponsoring a quartet (yet to be identified) this summer at the Iowa Choral Directors symposium. He noted that David Calland has been selected to lead that symposium. Another Society member is coming to the event to introduce the quartet, and to advocate that educators put barbershop into their curriculum. Ed suggested that a similar type of program be offered to a comparable organization in Michigan. He noted that the Des Moines chapter has submitted an application for a H/F innovation grant to support this activity.

Ed has a concern that the grant application process doesn't match the calendar process that occurs in schools. He knew that this topic will be covered soon in a Society board meeting.

Ed reiterated that board members should let him know about any questions or issues that need to be addressed. He mentioned that everyone should have his e-mail address.

XI. Chapter and District growth plan (extra item):

Paul Ellinger asked for a moment to discuss a topic that was discussed by some board members via Basecamp. He knew that some members do not have access to Basecamp, and therefore have not seen the discussion.

He pointed that a plan has been developed for growing our District and the membership of its chapters. Part of the plan is to offer training to District leaders to communicate some concepts that have been proven to be beneficial. Paul is looking for a date when a group can meet. While convention weekends have been proposed, it has been concluded that they are just too busy. He asked that board members respond when a communication comes out with a proposed date. It may be a Saturday or a Sunday.

XII. Adjournment:

At 12:36 p.m., Doug Weaver moved that the meeting be adjourned. Paul Ellinger seconded the motion. **Motion approved.**

Chris Berry was asked to direct the group in the singing of "Keep the Whole World Singing".