

Minutes of the Pioneer District Board of Directors of SPEBSQSA, Inc.
held on April 19, 2013, in the Northwoods Boardroom of the Grand Traverse Resort & Spa
(The meeting was originally scheduled to be held in the Council Room.)

Attendees:

-----Members present: Doug Weaver (president), Dan Bezaire (executive vice-president), Jim McMahan (secretary), Larry Parker (treasurer), and Brian Dunckel (immediate past president)

-----Members absent: (none)

-----Guests: David Calland (representative from Society Board)

I. Call To Order:

President Doug Weaver began the meeting at 12:26 p.m.

The agenda was adopted by consensus.

II. Minutes of the BOD meeting on January 6, 2013:

Although the minutes of the January 6, 2013, meetings of the Management Team meeting and of the Board of Directors were both approved at the MT meeting immediately preceding this meeting, the secretary suggested that these minutes should be approved independently.

Dan Bezaire moved that the minutes be approved, and Brian Dunckel made the second. **Motion approved.**

III. Treasurer's report:

It was observed that this report had been received at the MT meeting immediately before this one. More properly, however, it should have been received at this meeting.

Brian Dunckel moved that the treasurer's report be received. Dan Bezaire made the second. **Motion approved.**

Brian Dunckel then moved that the budget provided by Larry Parker as a part of his treasurer's report be approved. Dan Bezaire made the second. **Motion approved.**

Larry Parker was complimented for the effort that he made to get the budget prepared.

IV. President's Comments:

Doug Weaver indicated that he had no comments to add to those he made at the MT meeting. He was looking forward to the restructuring vote that will be taken at the HOD meeting.

V. Convention Matrix:

Larry Parker distributed two 3-page documents that delineate the Pioneer District policy for complimentary services at conventions. The document dated May 1, 2011, was the existing policy, and the document dated April 19, 2013, was a revision of the policy he was presenting for approval.

Larry began to describe some of the changes reflected in the revision. The first one he noted on page 1 was the elimination of pre-convention dinners for District staff---an item that has been discontinued. On the second page of the document he had a listing of the rooms for staff that are complimentary (two nights or three nights). He mentioned that there are a few changes in the latest version. Larry was recommending adoption of the revised policy.

V. Convention Matrix (cont.):

Brian Dunckel noticed a correction that should be made on Item 4.k. regarding comp rooms for "Society representatives on business". The document only authorized two nights, but it was noted that it should be increased to three nights so that these individuals can be here on Friday.

Larry noticed that the old Item 4.k. referred to "Society Board Member—paired district not on business". Brian clarified that we no longer have visitors who are in that category.

Brian asked if the board could take the proposed revision and look it over more carefully before voting on it. Doug Weaver acknowledged that we could do that. He noted that, after today, an electronic vote would involve a larger group.

Some confusion about the language of Item 4.k. occurred briefly because the old document was being misidentified as the new one.

Doug Weaver commented further on the question of doing an electronic vote on this item. He noted that the members of the restructured board would be at a disadvantage in voting because they would not be familiar with the discussion we were having on the topic.

An alternative plan was proposed to review the revised document in the short time available before the HOD meeting and vote on it verbally.

The secretary proposed that a motion be made here to approve the revised policy---to include the one change on Item 4.k., plus any other minor corrections that are subsequently discovered. That way, if no such corrections are found, the revised policy is incorporated into the minutes already.

Before such a motion could be made, Brian noticed that Item 3.I. (Charities Chairman) could be eliminated.

Larry Parker then recalled that Roger Lewis had noticed that the backstage crew (Items 3.j. and 3.k.) needed complimentary rooms for three nights.

Brian Dunckel also noticed that complimentary rooms for the Troubadour staff had not been added to the revision. This occurred because, at the time of the last revision, the Troubadour was not being published. There are now three editors of the Troubadour. They should be provided two ½ night complimentary rooms and free registrations. It was pointed out that one of the editors (Greg Humbel) already gets a room because of his work on the big screen.

Larry Parker complained that many of the persons who receive complimentary registrations fail to register because they assume they are registered automatically! Larry also asked for clarification on the color of the badge that Greg should receive. Brian Dunckel noted that the color was irrelevant since Greg does not sit in a seat, but is stationed at the computer.

While Larry was talking, he received a call from the registration desk about a complimentary badge for Jeff Woodworth. It was affirmed that he should get one because of his role as auditorium manager on behalf of the District. Larry asked the desk to determine if Jeff had pre-registered. Jeff replied that he had been registered by his chapter, but apparently that was not done.

It was established that the complimentary rooms and registrations for the Troubadour staff should be added as a new Item 2.o.

Doug Weaver asked if Dawn Spear had been included on the list. At first it was thought that she was counted among the workers from the host chapter. However, it was noted that she is not from the host chapter. She was added to the list as a new Item 3.I. She was allocated two ½ night room reservations and a complimentary registration. It was recommended that she be listed on the Matrix by name because of the unique backstage role that she performs. If she ceases to do that role, we may not continue this item in the document.

V. Convention Matrix (cont.):

Doug Weaver asked for a motion for "tentative" approval of the Matrix. However, the secretary suggested that we move to approve the document---subject to any minor adjustments that may be identified prior to the start of the HOD meeting.

Brian Dunckel moved for approval of the document (with the caveat noted above). Dan Bezaire made the second. **Motion approved.**

VI. Event Funding Requests:

1. Holland chapter:

Doug Weaver indicated that the first request for youth program funding came from this chapter to support a high school talent show. The chapter has made a commitment to do the event. Harmony Foundation has turned down a request from the chapter for financial support because it is not an educational event. The chapter is still asking for support from the District. Doug noted that a budget for the show had been provided. **[A copy of this document was attached to the records of this meeting.]**

Dan Bezaire asked if we might be setting a precedent if we do provide support.

Larry Parker asked about the nature of the program. Doug replied that it was a talent show for choruses and small groups. He observed that the prizes for the winning groups were quite sizeable. Brian Dunckel admitted that aspect scared him. He mentioned an effort by the Lansing chapter to do a similar event many years earlier. For that contest, it was difficult to get contestants. The prizes there were only \$500 each, and were given as college scholarships. The prizes being offered by Holland might get more contestants. Brian also was concerned that contestants at Holland could win in both the popular choice and judge's choice categories. Doug, however, was of the belief that the Holland contest rules did not allow that to happen.

It was assumed that this was the second time that the Holland chapter has held this event. It was unknown what kind of response the chapter had for the first one. It was suggested that this event had a huge budget that might only be serving a rather small group of participants.

Doug Weaver wondered if he should ask the chapter for more info before we make a decision. Brian Dunckel concurred with that idea, and mentioned four questions he already had:

1. Is this their second year?
2. What was their response last year?
3. Are the awards being offered the same as last year's?
4. Finally, why are they also paying a performance fee of \$800 to a college quartet to sing once on their show? (He compared this to the \$500 that the Mt. Pleasant chapter will be paying a college quartet to be the teaching quartet for three days at the Harmony Explosion camp.)

It was suggested that lack of support from H/F, and perhaps from the District, will require that the chapter trim its very ambitious budget. It was also noted that program ad sales look awfully low.

Doug Weaver indicated that he would seek some more info from the chapter, and then perhaps submit a revised request to the District staff via an electronic vote. Meanwhile, the topic would be tabled for now.

2. Mt. Pleasant chapter:

Doug Weaver reported that this chapter has submitted a budget for its scheduled Harmony Explosion camp. **[A copy of this document was also attached to the records of this meeting.]**

VI. Event Funding Requests (cont.):

2. Mt. Pleasant chapter (cont.):

The chapter has requested \$2190 of District support to cover the expense of the staff for this event. Larry Parker asked if the staff members were from the District. The secretary said that they were not. "Shades of Jade" will be the female teaching quartet. This will be their third year in this role. The chapter tried to get "Ringmasters" as the male teaching quartet, but could not do so. It was believed that a District quartet had been contracted for this role. Finally, the overall clinician will be Joe Cerutti.

The chapter has also submitted a request for support from Harmony Foundation, and has been told that funding will be provided at the same level as last year.

The secretary reported that Joe McDonald had made an innovative request to H/F based on the realization that the Foundation wants to direct more of its funds over time as "seed money" for the creation of new youth barbershop camps. Therefore, Joe made a grant request that covers six years. The first two years of the document represent the financial history of the event. The next three years request continuing---but decreasing---H/F support. The last year is one of no support. The chapter's long-term plan is to establish a "nest egg" from the income derived at each year's event, and use that money to initiate the next year's event without any support from H/F.

Doug Weaver suggested that the District should act favorably upon this request because it meets the criteria that have previously been stated.

It was clarified that our support would only be for the staff fee, while the cost of staff travel will come out of the income derived from registrations. Staff fees represent professional fees for the teaching work that is done by the quartets and clinicians.

Brian Dunckel moved that the District provide the \$2190 of support for the staff fees. Dan Bezaire made the second. **Motion approved.**

VII. New Business:

1. Top Gun fee adjustment:

Doug Weaver reminded everyone that this topic had been discussed via the electronic vote mechanism, but it had been concluded that it needed to be reviewed here after the actual costs and expenses were defined. Based on the original budget, the four quartets were charged \$400 each. However, our expenses came in much lower than projected because of several reasons. The final cost was a lot less. Doug suggested that we not treat this activity as a money-making thing for the District, but instead make it as reasonable as possible for the quartets. He advocated that we pro-rate the savings we made and give the quartets a refund (rounded-off).

Brian Dunckel suggested that we call the money we give the quartets a "return of an overpayment of fee" so that it doesn't appear that we are making payments to them. To describe the adjustment as a simple "refund" could otherwise set a precedent.

In order to determine the amount of overpayment, Larry Parker noted that we received \$1600, but our expenses were only \$1346.28. The difference between those numbers was \$397.62, i.e., almost \$400. Larry suggested that amount be divided between the four quartets.

It was noted that projected expenses were \$2975, so we did achieve a considerable savings in the management of the event.

Brian Dunckel moved that we return \$100 to each quartet as an overpayment of their registration fee. Dan Bezaire made the second. **Motion approved.**

VII. New Business (cont.):

2. Youth chorus sponsorship:

Doug Weaver had previously described this opportunity at the Management Team meeting. He asked the board to consider this plan so it could be announced at the HOD meeting. He reminded everyone that if a \$10,000 sponsorship is underwritten by donations from District chapters, there will be two matching sponsorships from individuals within the District. He noted that the catch to this plan is that the District would have to make up any shortfall if the monies donated by the chapters do not equal \$10,000.

It was confirmed that the collection of donations from chapters for this sponsorship would occur at the fall convention. That's why it must be announced at the upcoming HOD meeting.

Sean Devine mentioned that the chapters had already seen the donation process at the last fall convention, so they should be more prepared this time. Donations should be larger.

The secretary asked if the proposed motion is that we would become a sponsor---with the understanding that the District would cover any shortfall. Brian Dunckel noted that the possibility of two matching sponsorships was irrelevant to the language of any motion.

Jim McMahan moved that the District become a sponsor of the Youth Chorus Festival, and that we cover any shortfall if the donations from District chapters do not equal \$10,000. Larry Parker made the second.

Brian Dunckel urged that we continue to pursue all opportunities to collect youth-related donations from the District membership. Specifically, he recommended that we take a bucket to the HOD meetings for donations. He noted that this used to be done regularly, and it typically will net around \$65 each time. He advocated that this collection be included in the donations for the YCF sponsorship.

Brian also noted that there are monies designated in the District budget as a youth fund. He wondered if we wanted to apply some of this money toward the \$2190 authorized for the Mt. Pleasant chapter's Harmony Explosion camp, or do we want to hold it back to cover any shortfall on the sponsorship.

There was a consensus that this YCF sponsorship opportunity must be promoted more strenuously this year. It was urged that this topic be presented whenever District staff make visits to chapters. Sean Devine volunteered to help with this effort by referencing to the new video that will be shown during the convention, and noting how a "parade of checks" can contribute to this sponsorship.

Brian Dunckel recalled that we have held 50:50 raffles at Leadership Academy in past years. He urged that this practice be resurrected. He observed that sometimes two raffles were held during the day, and one year a total of \$1000 was collected in this manner---because the winner gave back his winnings!

Brian noted that we missed an opportunity at a recent big event where \$1.00 could have collected for this purpose from every person.

A vote was taken on the motion pending. **Motion approved.**

3. Policy regarding expenditures by the District Treasurer:

Larry Parker noted that the language of the "Reimbursement of Expenses Policy" called for approval of expense reports by the District President. He wondered how that could be done, since the treasurer sees those documents, but the president usually does not.

VII. New Business (cont.):

3. Policy regarding expenditures by the District Treasurer (cont.):

Brian Dunckel indicated that the policy has changed with time. Originally, expense reports were being given to the Executive VP for review. Later, this responsibility was shifted to the DP, and then finally the treasurer was given sole authority to determine if an expense was legitimate.

Larry was concerned about the large number of checks that he has written without anyone reviewing the expenses. The secretary observed that all of those checks were probably related to items approved as part of the District budget. If the expense was approved in the budget, it shouldn't be necessary to re-approve it. Brian Dunckel concurred that this why the process evolved to the current system. Brian emphasized that the District Treasurer is the CFO for the District (the corporation), and has full authority to fulfill that role.

Larry declared that a copy of an expenditure request had been attached to the records of every payment he had made. From working with Larry in the past, Brian said he was confident that Larry had all of the documentation to support every transaction.

Larry lamented that he had received records from Robb Smith and his predecessors that went back to 1987, and the documents were not well organized.

Doug Weaver asked Larry if he was comfortable with the system. Larry indicated that he was, but was concerned about what the policy said. The secretary suggested that the policy should probably be revised. He urged Larry to do some editing of the document, and then submit it for a Pivote. This would be possible because the action would be minor editing of an existing policy.

4. District website calendar:

Doug Weaver asked the secretary to summarize the events that caused a problem with the usage of the District calendar on the website. He indicated that a chapter wanted to publicize a "chapter show" that was to be a 75th anniversary show. However, the chapter was not selling tickets for the event, but was getting paid a performance fee. It was expected that the organization selling the tickets would be responsible for the copyright licensing fees. The secretary decided to allow the show to be placed on the District calendar on the premise that it was a "chapter show", and it involved multiple chapters.

After the District webmaster had been authorized to list the show, the chapter then announced that it was having a regular chapter show in the fall! This put us in an awkward situation because the calendar was now being used to publicize a non-chapter-hosted event. The District webmaster did change the wording of the listing to describe the event as a "hosted appearance" of the chapter.

The secretary was concerned about this situation setting a precedent of allowing chapters to publicize other non-chapter-sponsored performances they were doing. He asked what the current policy of the District is, or what kind of policy do we want to establish regarding usage of the District calendar for the publicizing of non-District/non-chapter-hosted events. He could foresee a big demand for this kind of publicity.

Brian Dunckel felt that chapters had other ways they can publicize their non-chapter performances---such as using Pionet. It is not like we won't let them use any of the other District communications tools. There was a consensus that we continue our current practice of limiting the usage of the District calendar to the publicizing of District-hosted and chapter-hosted events. Dan Bezaire observed that this allows us to know that all of the appropriate copyright licensing procedures are being followed.

The secretary affirmed that if anyone should notice this one aberration, they will be informed that it was a single instance. It did not set any precedent, and the District policy has since been clarified to indicate that it will not happen again.

VII. New Business (cont.):

5. Question about a Harmony Foundation rep serving as a judge:

Sean Devine reported that, because of weather, one of the judges for the convention was not going to be able to arrive in time for the evening contest. Roger Lewis is trying to find a replacement for that judges, and Sean could be identified as being qualified to fill the vacancy. However, Sean observed that Harmony Foundation staff members try to avoid serving as judges in the districts where they do fund-raising.

Sean wanted to get a feeling from board about whether he should be a judge. He did note that his mission is to serve the district. His supervisor, Clarke Caldwell, has concurred that Sean has that mission. Nevertheless, Sean was reluctant to serve as a judge while being here as a fund-raiser---unless we were comfortable with this dual role.

Doug Weaver noted that if Sean didn't help in this instance, we might be short one judge. It was observed that another option is to double the score of one of the other judges.

Doug opined that he was more comfortable with Sean serving as a judge than having an empty slot.

Sean hoped that others would be identified as being eligible, and that the situation would not develop to the point where the Contest Administrator had to come to him.

There was a consensus that we were comfortable with Sean performing in this role if it became necessary. The secretary suggested that we be up-front with the convention-goers about the situation. We should explain that we would not normally ask Sean to do this task, but he is qualified.

VIII. Adjournment:

At 1:08 p.m. it was moved by Larry Parker and seconded by Brian Dunckel that the meeting be adjourned. **Motion approved.**

Minutes prepared by Jim McMahan, Secretary, Pioneer District of SPEBSQSA, Inc.