

# January Meeting Minutes



Type of Meeting: General  
 Meeting Called by: Edmonton String Players  
 Association  
 Date: January 12, 2019  
 Time: 10:00am  
 Location: #210, 11803 125 Street

| ATTENDEES           |                           |                   |                 |
|---------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| Sherlynn Der        | Christine Mercier         | Joanne MacDonald  | Augustine Wong  |
| Patricia Estabrooks | Sheila Albrecht           | Lisa Jespersen    | Brian Dunsmore  |
| Christine Daum      | Guillaume Tardif          | Seema Ganatra     | Helen Young     |
| Michelle Guo        | Michael Kong              | Sul-ah Kim        | Joy Tan         |
| Jingyi Ao           | Kathalina Olsen           | Brian Olsen       | Yubin Wang      |
| Chien Hung Chan     | Linda Sahli               | Nicole Chen       | Yu Zhang        |
| Esayas Aemelish     | Holly McCabe              | Trevor Maj        | Carla Maj       |
| Deny Malasador      | Christina Hydamaacka Rust | Annette Gustafson | Beverly Hoskins |
| Jack Mah            | Kevin Li                  | Sara Wipperman    | Aileen Polushin |
| Dino Corazza        | Teresa Lank               | Darren Caul       | Yuanxiang Gu    |
| Debra Dawe          | Marie DeBorja             | Noreen Hoskins    | Courtney Cline  |

| MINUTES                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                              |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| <b>CALL TO ORDER: 10:03AM</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                              |
| <b>1. Introductions</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Round Table                                  |
| <b>2. January Agenda Approval</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Motion: Debra Dawe<br>Second: Noreen Hoskins |
| <b>3. Minutes Approval- December 1, 2018</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Motion: Holly McCabe<br>Second: Debra Dawe   |
| <b>4. Report – President</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Winterfest concert went well. 50/50 raffle earned \$450. Of that \$225 went to the winner, and that parent donated the money back to the program. Including that, total donations were \$586.</li> </ul> | Sherlynn Der                                 |
| <b>5. Report – Treasurer</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accounts               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>General Operating: \$198, 419.70</li> <li>Casino &amp; Bingo: \$23, 627.62</li> <li>ETransfer: \$785.83</li> </ul> </li> </ul>             | Augustine Wong/Sherlynn Der                  |

Question posed: What is our yearly budget or yearly expenditures? This is important to know in further discussion as we make decisions. Primarily, can we afford a coordinator?

Answer: In 2017 there was a 33,000 deficit, 2018 there was a 75,000 surplus. The difference was mainly due to the Casino funds were not deposited after volunteering in Sept 2017 until March 2018 therefore teachers/conductors wages were paid out of operating account for those few months.

## 6. New Business

### a. Discussion about the viability of the ESPA/MEP:

Deb Dawe - was on the executive a few years ago and can attest to the extreme amount of work that the executive needs to do, more than is reasonable for volunteer parents. There was a similar discussion 2 years ago. The consensus then was that the program is no longer viable in the current format with only executive to run it. In the October AGM, no one wanted to volunteer because the task is too much. At least a part time coordinator would make it more attractive for people to join the board because it wouldn't be so overwhelming.

Parent comment: Coordinator would be a difficult position to fill. Could we instead use a corporate secretary? We could then have sub committees formed to do the work. Response: This idea has been tried before, but the sub committees didn't fulfill their roles.

Joanne MacDonald: One main problem is that we don't have a coherent program with all the teachers working together. To continue with group classes, we need someone who can recruit, train, mentor, evaluate the teachers and get them working together.

Patricia Estabrooks: In the past she was artistic director but couldn't make it work. Teachers didn't buy in, they didn't come to meetings or training. There is no skill training system. If teachers can make more money other places they will go. She recommends phasing out group classes, beginning with no Level 1, and focus on the orchestras.

Parent comment: She would feel intimidated putting her kids directly into the orchestra without several years of private lessons. Her kids are in MEP classes and think they are great. The students are learning more than they did with private lessons. The group classes have great value.

Response from Patricia Estabrooks: Students only need one year of lessons before beginning orchestras. We are the only ones who offer at this level. The other orchestras in the city start at RCM level 4 or higher. Also, we are only Strings, which is different than orchestras that have winds, etc. So what we offer is unique.

Parent comment: She took lessons as a child and played in orchestras. She knew that for her own children with special needs, Suzuki wasn't a good option. MEP provides a good program at a lower cost so that it makes it an accessible entry point for students with different needs. She also wishes that parents could be allowed into the classes to help.

Response from Sherlynn - It is our agreements with the schools that prevents parents from attending their children's classes as 1 particular school the principle had requested all parents to wait for their children at the front foyer.

Discussion

Deb Dawe: Regarding dropping beginner classes, some of the teachers do have lots of experience and are doing a great job. Can we have just the select, excellent teachers provide classes in the office space. Then we can continue to have classes, but whittle down to fewer and utilize our resources more efficiently.

Question: Why are most of our classes in the SW? Answer: Because that's where the teachers live and are willing to teach. We would need to find space in the SW for them to continue teaching for us.

Patricia Estabrooks: Proposal to create an executive from non-parents, people who have the time, passion, willingness to serve. If we dropped beginning classes, these people could then focus on transitioning to orchestra only.

Question: If we drop beginner classes, then will we then end up with not enough kids for the orchestras: Answer: The majority of students in the orchestras are already coming from private teachers. So we need to increase publicity to private teachers so they encourage their students to come to MEP.

Comment: If we keep the classes, then we need to pay someone to coordinate.

Question: Why don't we recruit more students so we can offer better wages to teachers? Response: There just are not teachers willing to be trained. We also don't have consistent spaces in the schools to offer them. Every time there is a new principal, they can decide not to host us any longer.

Recommendation: That we form a committee to examine the problems and report back a month from now. New subcommittee members: Brian Dunsmore, Patricia Estabrooks, Guillaume Tardiff, Darren Caul, Noreen Hoskins, Annie Wang, Trevor Maj.

Motion: Brian Dunsmore  
Second: Christina  
Hydamaka-Rust

**b. Upcoming Important Dates:**

January 29 Bingo still needs 2 spots filled plus 1 spare

**7. Next Meeting**

Date: Saturday, February 2, 2019

Time: 10:00am

Location: #210, 11803 125 Street

**MEETING ADJOURNED: 11:16AM**