

Nathan Rihn called the meeting to order and asked everybody to introduce their selves.

### **Rundown of the WVMEA Executive Board Meeting**

Mr. Rihn presented. All performances will be at the Clay Center. They say don't help out setting up the stage because there is union people to do that. ID badges serve as tickets, the ushers won't let anyone in without tickets. Anyone with pictures they want to send to the marketing people, forward them to [marketing@wvmea.org](mailto:marketing@wvmea.org)

Civic Center next year is asking 3x the amount of money to use this space. The higher ups can't in good faith commit to that facility for next year, so they're actively looking at bids elsewhere. This could be good news for us because it might allow us to go to ASTA. As of now, the date for next year's conference is the same as ASTA, but that could change. They're not releasing a lot of information because they're still kicking around ideas, as soon as the leadership knows anything, they'll send that out. The reason for the price increase was to offset construction costs to the center.

### **String Day**

Tricia Price presented. They are looking for hosts for next year. Jeff Lipscomb proposed hosting it in Charleston. Cassandra Nelson proposed to host it in Morgantown. It was decided to host it at Morgantown, with Ms. Nelson as coordinator. An exact date wasn't arrived at yet because the schedules for various events and sports need to be looked at.

### **State Strings Festivals**

Patty Brock presented about the WV Orchestra Festival. She said everyone she talks with can't come, and she thinks it's the point where it won't work at that time of year (because it's during/after graduation and the difficulty of getting buses).

Dr. Sturm presented on the Mountain State Orchestra Festival, held in November. She mentioned difficulty in getting groups to attend, the ones who did were her own and Mr. Rihn's groups in the same county and another group from Frederick, MD. She had people from WVU and Shenendoah to workshop with the children. She thought it was successful, she just wished there was more participation. Mr. Rihn expressed preference for a Spring date for a festival because of the issue of getting 9th grade students acclimated to more difficult music.

Dr. Lipscomb presented on his festival.

Ms. Nelson asked if there was even interest in a state festival and then if we can petition to have a state adjudication so that it can be scheduled around sports and other events like bands. Justin Jones mentioned the reason why bands have that leeway is because they're sanctioned by the WVSSAC. Mr. Rihn advised against involved with WVSSAC. Ms. Nelson said she didn't want that either but take the mindset of it and coordinate with other organizations to set up regional festivals.

Mr. Rihn said we'd need to take a deep look at that if we were to commit to that. He asked Ms. Brock about participation in the Strawberry festival, and she said at the beginning there were 8-15 ensembles, but last year there were only 3. Ben Rupert said

he thought there's a lot of merit towards holding festivals, and about the importance of pulling judges from outside the state.

Mr. Rihn talked through dividing the state into regions centered around the panhandle, Morgantown, and Charleston. There was some discussion where Buckhannon would fit. Mr. Rihn proposed that the sites could be rotated due to drive distances. There was discussion about how many people the facilities could fit, and whether we were talking including full symphonies

Mr. Rupert asked if we were considering making this a requirement because it would only work if people had to go. Mr. Rihn said he'd love to do that. Rayce Lieb said that this adds to an already full schedule, and asked about the validity of this. He asked about consolidating some of the events (Cello Day, Viola Day, etc.) into 1 or 2 big things per year. Mr. Rihn said that trying to do one would equal a five hour trip for someone.

Ms. Nelson mentioned that even though we may not want to get involved with WVSSAC, the benefit would be that it would be mandated and it would make it easier to get transportation. Kate O'Connell said she did not want to get involved with WVSSAC because the strings attached would not be worth it. Mr. Rihn said we have total control over what we do, and he likes that.

Ms. Brock asked if we needed a motion to not do the Strawberry Festival this year. Mr. Rihn said she could say they weren't doing it. He also said there was no reason if we do regional festivals that the Strawberry Festival can't continue and tie into a region.

Ms. O'Connell said the issue is still the time of year though. Mr. Rihn asked her to talk about Ohio county and what they do annually. She told us about how active her concert schedule is and that adding more events would be too much. She said they don't do Music in the Parks anymore because it was not worth it anymore. Mr. Rihn asked if we do regional festivals if it would be something that could be fit into May. There was general agreement that wouldn't work, notably because of testing. Ms. O'Connell noted that everyone wasn't unwilling to do stuff, it's just that everyone is being hammered right now.

Mr. Rihn said he worries about the isolation we are from one another. Someone said the geography enters into that. Ms. O'Connell noted there's still the possibility of Skyping, which hasn't come to fruition so far. She proposed maybe having similar classes meet at certain days for a Skype group lesson, or we can co-teach or do clinics. She added that given the geography and the economy of the state, it wouldn't be feasible to get together on a more regular basis. Mr. Rieb and Mr. Cavani also noted that we have lives, families, and other professional obligations.

Ms. Nelson offered an idea of a voluntary upload of recordings. Dr. Sturm said that was the same as what is done with honor ensembles and solo and ensemble at WVMEA. That organization has 5 judges and only 1 strings person, but if we decide to go that route we can hire only strings judges.

Mr. Rihn said that we're getting to the main root of why we're talking about this, that transportation costs have to come from out of our own pockets. If we set up regional competitions, we can take that to our administrators, who would think of it differently because of their familiarity with how bands do festivals. Ms. O'Connell replied that she, Mr. Jones, and Shelby Genberg had talked about this before, that

teachers can travel around on their professional development days to listen to other groups, and that would count as collaboration.

Mr. Rihn noted that's a great idea, because they've tried to set up a NAFME Academy for us involving 5 different professional development classes, but under the strings category they only had ukulele, guitar, and strings for band directors. Ms. O'Connell noted she was having trouble getting her administration to give just music only professional development. Dr. Sturm noted she liked the recording idea too, and that was something we could fund with our ASTA funds.

Mr. Rihn noted that if Ms. Brock, Dr. Sturm, and Dr. Lipscomb want to continue to do their festivals, they should still throw those out there. He emphasized the need to communicate more about the possible events to gauge interest, and what times would work.

### **Treasurers Report**

Ms. Brock reported that our balance as of last year was \$7,465.55. Total deposits were \$1,907.83, for a total balance of \$9,373.38. Expenses added up to \$1,941.78, so our current balance is \$7,431.60

Mr. Rihn mentioned we'd talked before about commissioning a piece for All State. Mr. Jones mentioned we talked about that 2 years ago as a possible composer thing, but nothing was done with it. Mr. Rihn asked Ms. Brock what was the most our group has lost in a year, and she answered that it was about \$2,000. Mr. Rihn proposed using this money since it's sitting there. Dr. Lipscomb noted that for composition contests, a \$1,000 prize is typical. Mr. Rihn asked if we're thinking about doing this as a contest or commissioning a specific composer. Dr. Lipscomb replied that if we commission a composer, the fee would depend on the composer.

Dr. Sturm also noted we talked before about establishing a scholarship a couple years ago too, and we haven't made any progress with that either.

Mr. Rihn said he wants to be a little bit more proactive this year, because we've talked about doing a bunch of things, and we haven't done them yet. He proposed an online meet up later to get the ball moving on some of this stuff (commissioning a piece, setting up a scholarship).

Mr. Rihn provisionally scheduled a (videoconference) meet up for June 13th.

Ms. Brock offered that if we were going to use professional days to go to one another's classes we could conceivably use little bit of that money to help cover mileage. Mr. Rihn noted that was contingent on whether our administrators would allow us to travel during professional development days. Ms. O'Connell offered that when talking with administrators we should talk about how the professional development offered by traveling wouldn't be available in their area.

Mr. Cavani asked if travel for professional development could be amended into our by-laws. Mr. Rihn noted that there would be a legal process for changing the by-laws. Dr. Sturm said yes, but that might not apply to the Orchestra Directors Association because it's not governed by a higher entity. Mr. Cavani said he was interested in this because it would give us something official to show to our administrators to allow for the travel. Mr. Rihn noted that since ODA and ASTA are two separate organizations, that having mileage reimbursed through ASTA wouldn't work if we were trying to justify

travel through ODA. Ms. O'Connell said we could still have travel approved through our local school boards as normal professional development

Mr. Rihn reiterated the June 13th meeting, over Skype, at 10AM.

### **Elections**

At the beginning of the meeting, our president-elect was Dr. ANdrea Houde, which means she will be ASTA president at the end of the meeting.

Dr. Sturm spoke to Dr. Erin Ellis prior to this meeting about the being nominated for ASTA president-elect, and she accepted that nomination. Ms. Brock was nominated for ASTA treasurer, and Dr. Lipscomb was nominated for ASTA secretary and webmaster. Both Ms. Brock and Dr. Lipscomb accepted their nominations. Dr. Sturm asked for any additional nominations. There were no other nominations.

For the Orchestra Directors Association. Justin Jones was nominated for president, but he refused due to his obligations with All State. Cassandra Nelson was nominated for vice-president. With no further nominations, she was voted to be president of that organization.

### **ASTA National Conference**

Mr. Rihn reiterated his hope that the schedule would work out that we could also go to the National ASTA conference. Dr. Sturm said she's been talking to the executive board about the scheduling conflict for the past 4 years as the historian. Mr. Rihn mentioned that we have to say something to the board, and Keith specifically. The big concern Mr Rihn had was if everybody went to the ASTA conference next year, then the orchestra performances at WVMEA would be cancelled, and we might not get them back

Ms. Brock asked for a motion to accept the ballet, because there was no formal votes for officers. The motion was seconded and voted for.

Mr. Rihn asked for a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded and voted for.