

Providence Federation of Musicians
GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Local Headquarters
Cranston, RI
Tuesday, March 10, 2015

MINUTES OF MEETING

Call to Order: 7:06 P.M.

Roll-Call of Officers

- **Present**
 - President **Artie Cabral**
 - Vice-President **Al DeAndrade**
 - Secretary-Treasurer **Ed Plunkett**
 - Executive Board Member **Carl Hosbond.**
 - Executive Board Member **John Worsley.**

Attendance

- Fifteen (15) members present, constituting a quorum.

In Memoriam

- Frank “Red” MacDonald
- John Dempsey
- Joan Ceo
- Guido Razza

Secretary’s Report

- **Minutes of December 2, 2014 Meeting** -- S/T Plunkett provides copies of the minutes of the General Membership Meeting held on December 2, 2014. EBM Worsley moves to accept the minutes of the meeting. EBM Hosbond seconds the motion. The motion **carries**.

Treasurer’s Report

- **2014 Year-End Financial Figures** – S/T Plunkett reads a summary of the financial statement for 2014. During 2014, the Local had income of \$113,127.08 and expenses of \$129,422.41, leaving a net **loss** of \$16,295.33. At the beginning of 2014, the Local had cash on hand of \$75,532.23. At the end of 2014 cash on hand was \$59,123.19.

S/T notes that \$13,000.00 of the 2014’s loss was due to the cost of Survivor’s Benefit payments. He observes that, had it not been for those death benefit payments, the Local would sustained a loss of \$3,295.33. This would have been down substantially from the nearly \$23,000.00 loss which the Local experienced in 2013.

S/T attributes the reduction to the financial reforms which were enacted at the December, 2013, General Meeting.

EBM Worsley moves to accept the Treasurer's report. Sister **Jane Murray** seconds the motion. The motion carries and the report is accepted.

Announcements

- **Providence Public Library** – S/T announces that the Providence Public Library will hold a special exhibition entitled "From Punk to Pop: Music in Providence in the Twentieth Century", from April 1 through June 30. The exhibition will include a number of historic photographs which the Local has loaned to the library. Members are encouraged to attend.
- **Rhode Island Music Hall of Fame** – VP announces that the Rhode Island Music Hall of Fame will induct four members of the Local in a ceremony to be held, just for them, at Bovi's Town Tavern in East Providence, on Monday evening, April 20, at 9:00 P.M. The four members are **George Masso, Duke Belair, Bob Petteruti** and **Marty Ballou**. A formal ceremony to honor all the inductees, including non-union players, will be held at the Met Café in Pawtucket on the following Sunday, April 26.

Communications

- None

Committee Reports

- **Finance Committee** – Brother **Jay Bianco**, as chair of the Finance Committee, reports out a resolution which was introduced at the October 27, 2014, General Membership Meeting. The resolution would eliminate the Survivor Benefit Fund. On behalf of the Committee, Brother Bianco reports the resolution favorably.

A long and heated discussion takes place about the pros and cons of eliminating the death benefit.

Brother Bianco explains that the Local can no longer sustain its method of self-funding the death benefit. S/T adds that when the Survivor's Benefit was created in December, 2004, its authors created the benefit but did not provide a funding mechanism. During the first few years, with relatively few deaths and high profits from the Local's fund raising activities, the Local was able to pay the death benefit out of the treasury. Since 2012, however, with a higher number of deaths, declining membership and a sharp drop in revenue from the fund-raisers, the Local has run out of cash to pay the death benefit.

S/T notes that he and the other officers have spent a lot of time researching commercial insurance plans, all to no avail, because insurance companies do not sell term life insurance to persons over the age of 60 and that more than half of the Local's membership is over that age.

Brother **Alex Mansour** asks what other Locals have done about their death benefit. S/T responds that this Local is one of the last in the country which still has a death benefit. Brother Mansour wonders what would be the purpose of staying in the Local for many of the Life members who are no longer working, if this benefit is taken away.

Brother **Dick Salzillo** comments that the Local will lose many members if the resolution passes.

VP DeAndrade notes that he had proposed eliminating the death benefit more than ten years ago -- using a phase-out approach -- but the Board at that time was unwilling to proceed.

Pres Cabral says that he himself did not recognize the problem, but now, because of the Local's financial plight, it is necessary to act swiftly.

Sister Jane Murray moves to approve the resolution to eliminate the Survivor's Benefit. Brother **Bill Custer** seconds the motion. On a show of hands, the motion carries 13 to 2, and the resolution is **approved**.

- **Ballet / Symphony / Opera Committee** – Sister Jane Murray, on behalf of the Ballet/Symphony/Opera Committee, reports out a resolution to amend the wage scale for symphonic performances (Schedule III), which was introduced at the December 2, 2014 meeting. The committee reports the resolution out favorably. Brother Salzillo asks how the committee arrived at the wage increases. Sister Murray says that because the last wage increases were more than ten years ago, the committee wanted only a small increase this time, so that the sponsoring organizations would not be hit hard all at once. However, she and the other committee members recommend reviewing and amending the wage scale at more frequent intervals, so that there is not such a great time lapse between increases. VP DeAndrade moves to approve the resolution to change Schedule III of the Wage Scale. Brother **Sandy Gorodetsky** seconds the motion. The motion carries and the resolution is **approved**.

- **Wage Scale Committee** – Brother **Eliot Porter**, on behalf of the Wage Scale Committee, reports out a resolution to amend the general Wage Scale. The resolution had been introduced at the December 2, 2014, General Membership Meeting. The committee reports the resolution favorably and recommends passage.

A discussion takes place over some of the finer details of the resolution.

S/T asks if some of the scales are still relevant, such as Island scales and Boat Trip scales. Sister Murray responds that some of the membership from the Newport area may actually be performing on boat trips. She herself does wedding on the islands. S/T also asks if there is any real difference between Schedule V, Class A (social functions) and Schedule V, Class F.

Brother Custer asks whether the increase in Class C (Big Band Scale) is too much. EBM Carl Hosbond and Brother Bianco, who both play in big bands, say that it is not.

EBM Hosbond points out a problem with the Class A scale, which may be too high for some small venues that employ musicians on a steady basis. S/T recommends changing the definition of "steady" jobs in Class F, where the scale is lower and could help those members employed on a steady basis.

After discussion, S/T moves to amend the original resolution to change the definition of "Steady Engagements" under Schedule V, Class F as follows:

"A steady engagement is an engagement occurring at the SAME PLACE during

the SAME HOURS for the SAME EMPLOYER for TWO OR MORE ~~CONSECUTIVE~~ NIGHTS PER ~~WEEK~~ MONTH."

VP seconds the motion to amend the resolution. On a voice vote the motion to amend the original resolution carries and the amendment is **approved**.

EBM Worsley moves to approve the wage scale resolution as amended. Brother Bianco seconds the motion. On a voice vote, the motion carries and the wage scale resolution, as amended, is **approved**.

Old Business

- **2015 Budget** – S/T Plunkett presents the 2015 annual budget, which had been introduced at the December 2, 2014 General Membership Meeting. S/T points out that the budget contains a built-in deficit of \$8,888.93. While this is not a desirable situation, he notes that \$6,000.00 of the deficit is an allowance for Survivor's Benefit payments. Since there have already been four deaths in the new year, the Local will probably have to expend the full amount for death benefit payments.

The balance of the built-in deficit, \$2,888.83, approximates the operating deficit which the Local experienced in 2014. Again, while this is not desirable, it is a big improvement over the deficits which the Local experienced in 2013 and 2014. Also, it will give the Local a little more time to figure out how to get the budget back into balance.

Sister Murray moves to approve the budget. EBM Worsley seconds the motion. On a voice vote, the motion carries and the 2015 budget is **approved**.

New Business

- **Introduction of resolution** – S/T presents a new resolution from the Executive Board to delay the salary increases for officers and dues increases for members which are currently scheduled to take effect in January, 2016. The resolution would push back all the increases for two years. S/T comments that, given the weak underlying business conditions in Rhode Island and the fact that the Local's budget is nearly in balance, the Board felt it would be appropriate to keep salaries and dues level for two more years and then to see if business conditions improve. S/T refers the resolution to the Finance Committee for review.

Good and Welfare

- **Discussion** -- Brother Gorodetsky notes that there have been a high number of resignations in recent months. He suggests that union officers should try to contact those members who have resigned to try to solicit the reasons for their resignations. VP DeAndrade says that he has talked to several resigned members, but the reasons they gave for resigning were vague. Brother Mansour comments that working conditions are so poor that the union may not survive. Brother Gorodetsky says that the union should do more self-promotion, including approaching college students who are music majors, to try to convince them to join the union.

- ***Cavalcade Changes*** – The topic which was originally scheduled as a "Special" meeting for tonight – ways to improve the *Cavalcade of Bands* – is opened for discussion.

VP DeAndrade says that the *Cavalcade* is a showcase for members, and that members who perform at the *Cavalcade* should do more promotion, not only to help the *Cavalcade* but to promote their own careers and bands.

Brother Gorodetsky says that he means being more proactive about getting the message out to new audiences. He notes that one of the problems with the *Cavalcade* is the "aging-out" of the current audience.

Pres Cabral says that young audiences don't want to hear the older style of music which is presented at the *Cavalcade*. Brother Gorodetsky disagrees and says he feels that it is possible to mix different age groups within the audience for the *Cavalcade*. VP DeAndrade asks Brother Gorodetsky if he thinks non-union bands, which tend to appeal to younger audiences, should be allowed to perform at the *Cavalcade*. Brother Gorodetsky replies that they could be used sparingly as a promotional tool.

S/T Plunkett notes that one of the most effective means of promoting the *Cavalcade* is the mailing list which the Local maintains. Currently, it contains over 2,000 names. However, these are almost all recurring customers and people who have attended in the past. The Local has not been able to get many new names. S/T says that it would be very helpful if the Local could get a mailing list from another organization and merge it into the *Cavalcade* mailing list. That would have the potential for greatly expanding the *Cavalcade* audience. EBM Worsley says that he can get mailing lists both from the RI Music Hall of Fame and from the Blackstone Valley Tourism Council, whose director is Bob Billington and who is also chair of the RI Music Hall of Fame. S/T concludes that any outside mailing list that could be obtained would be a great benefit for the *Cavalcade*.

- **Union Theaters** -- Brother Gorodetsky inquires about whether the Local is monitoring the hiring of bands at Local theaters, in particular the Park Theater in Cranston. He thinks that picketing a venue which hires non-union musicians would generate a lot of publicity for the Local and encourage non-union players to join. He questions how some of the theaters in Providence can hire non-union musicians. Pres Cabral responds that the major houses, like the Providence Performing Arts Center (PPAC) are covered by a Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) with the Local. When those venues do bring in non-union players, they are usually self-contained traveling bands.

Adjournment

EBM Worsley moves to adjourn. Brother Salzillo seconds the motion. The meeting is adjourned at 8:50 P.M

Respectfully submitted,

Edward J. Plunkett
Secretary-Treasurer

Approved: _____ / _____ / _____

Attested: _____
(Secretary-Treasurer)