

Unison Festival – Festival Unisson

Annual General Meeting

December 9, 2018

Minutes

Chair: Matthew Gillespie

Recording Secretary: Sheila Ward

1. Call to order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 3:33 pm at New Central Library, Room 0-13, 800 – 3 Street SE, Calgary, Alberta.

Roll call

Members present in person: Matthew Gillespie, Liz Graves, Don Kozak, Rocky Walbaum, Sheila Ward

Members by proxy: Janey Bevan, Janice Kinch, Holger Mauthe, Michael Wright

Members present via video conference: Sue Atkinson, Vince Ciarlo, Susanne Litke, Carrie Melsom, Carlos Parra-Herran, Gianluca Ragazzini, Michael Roth, Kim Vance-Mubanga, Yohei Sakai (joined late)

Total number of members present or represented by proxy: 17

Seventeen (17) members of the Corporation entitled to vote being in present in person, via video conference, or represented by proxy, the Chair declared that a quorum was present in accordance with the By-Laws of the Corporation and that the meeting was therefore properly constituted for the transaction of business.

Guests present: Cora Castle (Unison Administrator)

2. Adoption of agenda

The chair presented the agenda (Appendix #1).

MOTION: That the agenda be adopted as presented.

CARRIED

3. Review and adoption of previous AGM minutes

MOTION: That the minutes from the March 2018 AGM be adopted as presented.

CARRIED

4. President's Report

Matthew presented the President's report. (Appendix #2)

Motion: To accept the President's report.

CARRIED

5. Report on Unison Festival 2018

Matthew presented the report. (Appendix #3) Matthew then asked for questions – no questions from Calgary folks. Matthew then asked each of the video participants in turn. There was one request for clarification of the number of delegates at the Festival, and many accolades for the Calgary organizing team.

6. Treasurer's Report

Liz Graves presented the Treasurer's Report. (Appendix #4)

7. Acceptance of financial statements

Liz presented Financial Statements for the year ended September 30, 2018, hitting highlights: notes 6, 7, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16. Questions: Matthew asked each video participant if they had questions – Vince asked about media sponsorship; Susanne asked about the GST rebate and clarification concerning profit/loss; Kim asked for clarification of dollar amount for Halifax start-up. Matthew thanked Liz and Cora for their assistance.

MOTION: That the 2017-2018 Financial Statements be accepted as presented, pending review by two non-board members.

CARRIED

8. Special Resolutions

a. Waive Appointment of Public Accountant

b. Level of financial review

Resolution:

WHEREAS the Corporation is considered a “Soliciting Corporation” under the Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act; AND WHEREAS the Corporation’s gross annual revenues for the 2017-2018 year are over \$250,000 and the members must therefore appoint a public accountant at each annual meeting and must engage the accountant to conduct an audit of the 2017-2018 financial statements;

BE IT RESOLVED that the officers of the Corporation be directed to engage a public accountant AND BE IT RESOLVED that the account appointed be engaged to conduct an audit of the 2017-2018 Financial Statements.

MOTION: to adopt the resolution as presented

CARRIED unanimously

c. Compliance with requirements for soliciting corporations

No resolution required.

9. Election of directors

Matthew noted that the current Board of Directors is dissolved as of today’s AGM. The term for the incoming Board will be for one year until the next AGM, in order for the incoming Board to work out necessary details. A call was sent to ask for folks to submit their names if they wished to stand for election. The names received are: Kirk Kryvenchuk, Gianluca Ragazzini, Sue Atkinson, Vince Ciarlo, Elizabeth Graves, Monica Jackson, Susanne Litke, Carrie Melsom, Yohei Sakai, Kimberley Vance-Mubanga, Carlos Parra-Herran.

There are 15 Board Director positions available. 11 names have been put forward.

Motion: That all of the candidates put forward be acclaimed to the Board of Directors.

CARRIED

Matthew thanked the out-going Board, especially the out-of-towners, for their efforts to make the 2018 Unison Festival possible. Liz spoke on behalf of the out-going board to acknowledge and thank Matthew for his work over the last five years.

10. Other Business

Carlos asked what is next. Matthew noted that Cora will send out an info package to all new Board Directors. The newly elected Directors will then set up their first board meeting. Cora and Liz will continue doing what they have been doing until other decisions may be made.

At this point the videoconference system went down, cutting connection with video participants. As the agenda was complete, the meeting was adjourned at 5:40 pm.

UNISON FESTIVAL – FESTIVAL UNISSON
Annual General Meeting

Sunday, December 9, 2018
4:30 pm MST

New Central Library, Room 0-13
800 3 Street SE, Calgary

AGENDA

- 1.** Call to order
- 2.** Adoption of agenda
- 3.** Review and adoption of previous AGM minutes
- 4.** President's report
- 5.** Report on Unison Festival 2018
- 6.** Treasurer's report
- 7.** Acceptance of financial statements
- 8.** Resolutions
 - a. Appointment of public accountant
 - b. Level of financial review
 - c. Compliance with requirements for soliciting corporations
- 9.** Election of directors
- 10.** Other business
- 11.** Closing

Appendix 2

President's Report

President's Report

Unison Festival – Festival Unisson AGM

December 9, 2018

Four years ago, when we commenced our journey toward Unison Festival - Festival Unisson in Calgary, we started with a plan that I feel we implemented very well. Calgary provided a great festival for the Canadian LGBTQ2+ choral community and built upon the foundation that Ottawa started in developing a national Unison organization.

In looking back over the last four years, we take from it many lessons learned and hope that we can continue to grow as a group that will not only provide a great festival every four years, but can build an organization that will assist and develop choruses across Canada.

The teamwork involved was essential in providing a festival that was open to many voices and our initiative to create a Canadian board truly helped. By having members from choruses outside Calgary we were able to understand the needs of the many rather than just here in Calgary.

In retrospect we could have done more, but time and resources were limited and I hope that in the future with the next board that more can be accomplished.

The festival itself was both an artistic and financial success thanks to the board and the many volunteers. We provided funding for two new commissioned works and also helped assist many delegates attend the festival with funding assistance. I especially want to thank Cora Castle the Unison Administrator for keeping us on track, Liz Graves our Treasurer for the financial guidance, the Board of Unison over the years for their dedication and sacrifice, our Volunteer Coordinator Jamie Davison and her amazing crew of volunteers, our Event Coordinator Jonathan Heath Smith and our fundraising team who worked with Greg John and Four Peaks Business Development to secure funding for our vision. That vision would not have been possible without the guidance of our fantastic Artistic Directors Jean Louis Bleau and Jane Perry who together created the memorable opening and closing concerts. I also want to thank Integra Planning for our online registration services and the constant assistance they provided, Trico Homes, Calgary Unitarians, the Calgary Arts Development Agency, the Calgary Men's Chorus, One Voice Chorus, the BarberEllas, and all our individual donors.

In reviewing our end of festival survey there were many positive notes and a few that identified areas we need to work on for future festivals such as community engagement and communications earlier in the process.

In moving forward, I am convinced that we are on the path towards a truly national organization that all our member choruses can be proud to be a part of. I know that Halifax 2022 will be a great success and a memorable event for all who will be part of the organization putting together this next festival.

Matthew Gillespie, President

UNISON FESTIVAL UNISSON 2018 SUMMARY REPORT

Overview

Unison Festival Unisson 2018 (“Unison 2018”) took place in Calgary, Alberta, on the May long weekend, from May 18 to 21, 2018. Unison 2018 was the sixth edition of the festival and marked 20 years since the first official national festival in Edmonton in 1998. The festival was in Calgary for the first time and back in Alberta for a second time, making the celebration of the 20th anniversary extra-special.

Unison 2018 was hosted by three Calgary choirs: Calgary Men’s Chorus, One Voice Chorus, and the BarberEllas.

Festival Team

The planning and preparation for the festival was led by the Board of Directors of Unison Festival – Festival Unisson. The artistic direction for Unison 2018 was provided by two Co-Artistic Directors, both based in Calgary: Jean-Louis Bleau and Jane Perry. The Unison Board engaged contractors and external volunteers in key roles to support festival planning and operations, as well as to support the organization itself: Administrator, Event Coordinator, Fund Development Lead, and Volunteer Coordinator. In hindsight, the Unison Board would also have engaged a Communications Coordinator for the year leading up to the festival.

Venue

Unison 2018 was held on the Mount Royal University campus in Calgary. The flagship Bella Concert Hall was the main concert venue, for the opening concert, concert blocks, and closing concert. Smaller theatres on campus were used for the Saturday evening “Musi-Circus” event, the campus residences were the primary festival accommodations, and campus facilities were used for social activities. The vision was to create a village atmosphere for delegates.

Program of Events

The tagline for the festival was “Be Creative!” This was an invitation to the festival planning team and also to the choirs attending the festival. The festival planning team also committed to making steps to Reconciliation with Indigenous peoples through the Unison 2018 festival.

The planning team crafted an exciting program of artistic, educational, and social events for the festival weekend. The schedule followed the pattern of previous Unison festivals, with an opening concert on Friday night, tech rehearsals and concert blocks on Saturday and Sunday, a banquet and dance on Sunday night, and a closing concert on Monday morning.

Following in the steps of Ottawa, the Calgary team programmed a special performance event for Saturday night, called the Musi-Circus. A broader program of social activities was planned than at previous festivals, to provide delegates with opportunities to socialize on campus through the weekend. The educational program for the weekend consisted of a leadership conference on Friday during the day, a choral workshop for delegates on Saturday and Sunday mornings, and the Festival Chorus.

The Calgary team broke with the pattern of past festivals when it came to the Festival Chorus. The team opted to create a Festival Chorus experience based on a single SATB massed-choir accompanied by a nine-piece band; the sort of experience most Unison delegates don’t have access to in their home

choirs. 125 visiting delegates registered for the Festival Chorus and were joined by approximately 100 singers from Calgary.

Participating Choirs

Twenty choirs attended Unison Festival 2018, including the three host choirs. Two of the twenty choirs registered for 15-minute “small ensemble” sets, the rest registered for 30-minute “full choir” performance slots.

Nineteen of the choirs were Canadian, coming from coast to coast. 8 of 10 provinces were represented; none of the territories was represented. There were two first-time Canadian choirs, both also newly formed since the 2014 Unison festival: St. John’s Gay Men’s Chorus and Les BarbaFellas (St.-Louis-du-Ha! Ha!, Quebec).

Choir registration was initially open to Canadian choirs only and space was held for all Canadian choirs who wished to attend all throughout the registration process. On July 1, 2017 choir registration opportunities were extended to choirs from outside Canada, pending available performance slots. One US choir applied for registration and was accepted: Triangle Gay Men’s Chorus from Raleigh, North Carolina.

Delegates

A total of 672 delegates registered for the festival, including choir staff (artistic directors, accompanists and managers) and 19 independent delegates. This represents a new high for participation at the Unison Festival. (Comparison – Ottawa 2014: over 600, Winnipeg 2010: over 500, Vancouver 2006: over 500)

Concert Attendance

Delegate registration fees included an all-concert pass that gave them admission to the opening concert, concert blocks, Musi-Circus, and closing concert. These concerts were also open to the general public. The concert with the highest public ticket sales was Concert Block 4, thanks to the Vancouver Men’s Chorus, which has a large fan base in Calgary. The Opening Concert was sold out, based on the assumption of 100% attendance by delegates. In the end, there were seats available in the hall.

Conclusion

No festival is perfect. There are lessons learned from the planning and operation of the Calgary festival that will be passed forward to the Halifax team.

Each Unison festival is also unique, based on the vision of the artistic team and the personality of the host choirs and the host city. The Calgary team successfully rose to the challenge to “Be Creative!”. We had the opportunity to showcase a world-class venue and some of Calgary’s musical talent. Naturally, we put a Calgary stamp on the festival. This is a city that is willing to support big dreams – happily for us!

The bottom line is that choirs and singers came and the delegates clearly had a good time. That’s one of the most important measures of success for the festival.

The festival was also successful financially. There was approximately \$30,000 in the bank when the Ottawa festival wrapped up. The financials for the Calgary festival are still being finalized. Based on the preliminary reports, we were able to add money to the Unison coffers as a result of the revenue generated through the Calgary festival.

Acknowledgements

Outgoing Board of Directors: Matthew Gillespie (President), Chuck Easton (Vice-President), Liz Graves (Treasurer), Sheila Ward (Secretary), Holger Mauthe, Janey Bevan, Janice Kinch, Michael Wright, Gianluca Ragazzini (Ottawa), Kirk Kryvenchuk (Edmonton), Michael Roth (Montreal)

Festival Team: Jean-Louis Bleau & Jane Perry (Co-Artistic Directors), Jonathan Heath-Smith (Event Coordinator), Jamie Davison (Volunteer Coordinator), Gregory John (Fund Development Lead), Cora Castle (Unison Administrator)

Appendix 4 Treasurer's Report

Treasurer's Report

Unison Festival – Festival Unisson AGM

December 9, 2018

It has been an honour to serve once again as your Treasurer this past year and I again would like to thank the Unison Board for their unwavering support in this task. Suffice it to say that in this festival year the work load of the Treasurer exceeded my expectations. Special thanks to Matthew Gillespie and Cora Castle for all your help.

Today I am presenting to the membership of Unison the Financial Statements for the fiscal year October 1, 2017 to September 30, 2018, in which we realized the 2018 Calgary Festival.

Highlights:

Calgary 2018

A quick mention that the Fiscal Year Financial results do not represent the results of the Calgary Festival. The results of the Calgary Festival are expressed in a 4-year time frame (October 01, 2014 to September 30, 2018). If you have an interest in the specific results of the Calgary Festival, I have prepared an Operating Statement for 2018 Calgary and have it available here today and by electronic copy. If you wish to receive a copy of this report, please email treasurer@unisonfestivalunisson.ca.

Corporate Expenses

Unison does not operate only in festival years. During the non-festival years there are ongoing expenses of the organization. These expenses are reported under the category of Corporate Expenses and ultimately are expressed as "Other Expenses" below the operating lines of the 2018 Calgary Festival.

Corporations Canada Audit

Corporations Canada requires that soliciting corporations that exceed \$250K in revenue engage a public accountant to conduct an audit of their Financial Statements. 2017-2018 being a festival year, Unison Festival exceeded revenue of \$250K and we are currently looking for a public accountant to conduct this audit as soon as possible after this AGM.

"An audit engagement is the process of engaging an independent public accountant to examine the accounting records and other supporting documents to the Financial Statements, to prepare Financial Statements and to render a professional opinion that the Financial Statements present a fair picture of the organization's financial position and its activities during the period in which the audit was carried out."

Calgary Host Choirs

Special thank you and mention to both Calgary Men's Chorus and One Voice Chorus. Both host choirs not only provided fabulous volunteer support during the Festival but also contributed financially in the amount of \$10K each during 2016-2017 and 2017-2018. This \$20K of support from the Host choirs helped tremendously with the presentation of the Calgary Festival.

Liz Graves, Treasurer