



Annual General Meeting
Sunday, March 20, 2022
Minutes

3:00 pm PT / 4:00 pm MT / 5:00 pm CT
6:00 pm ET / 7:00 pm AT / 7:30 pm NT

Zoom Video Conference

Chairperson: Kim Vance-Mubanga, President
Recording Secretary: Vince J. Ciarlo, Secretary

Member choruses present:

AVIVA Chorus (Nanaimo)	Halifax Gay Men's Chorus
BarberEllas (Calgary)	One Voice Chorus (Calgary)
Calgary Men's Chorus (Calgary)	Singing Out (Toronto)
Choeur Gai d'Ottawa Gay Men's Chorus	Spectrum Queer Choir Inc. (St. John's)
Edmonton Vocal Minority (Edmonton)	The Women Next Door (Halifax)
Ensemble vocal Ganymède (Montreal)	Tone Cluster-quite a queer choir (Ottawa)
Forte – Toronto Gay Men's Chorus (Toronto)	Vancouver Men's Chorus (Vancouver)

Individual members present:

D. Cantiller	K. Kryvenchuk (by proxy)	P. Mahar
G. MacDonald	K. Griffiths	R. Millar
G. Ragazzini	L. Eschak	S. Litke
G. de Lorme	L. Cousineau	T. Cross
J. Perry	L. Graves	V. Ciarlo
J. Bevan	M. Esteves	Y. Sakai
K. Vance-Mubanga	M. Gillespie	

Staff present: Cora Castle, Unison Administrator

1. Call to order.

Kim Vance called the meeting to order at 6:15 p.m. EDT.

2. Land Acknowledgement

Vince Ciarlo read the Land Acknowledgement.

3. Adoption of agenda

Gianluca Ragazzini motioned that the agenda for the 2022 Annual General Meeting be adopted as presented.

Seconded by Jane Perry

Motion approved.

4. Review and adoption of previous AGM minutes

Len Cousineau motioned that the minutes from the 2021 Annual General Meeting be approved.

Seconded by Corinne Devison

Motion approved.

5. Bylaw amendment: Virtual meetings of the Members

The Board of Directors of Unison Choruses Canada approved the addition of a new subsection to Section 4 (Meetings of Members) of the Bylaws of the Corporation on November 21, 2021 as follows:

4.07 Virtual Meetings

The Directors may decide by ordinary resolution to hold a Meeting of the Members virtually using digital technologies, provide the digital technologies permit all Members participating in the meeting to communicate adequately with each other during the meeting. A Member who attends a meeting using such digital technologies shall be deemed to be personally present at the meeting.

The change to the bylaws took effect immediately upon approval by the Board of Directors, in accordance with the *Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act*, pending confirmation of the change by ordinary resolution of the Members at the next meeting of the Members.

Len Cousineau motioned to confirm the amendment to the Bylaws as described above.

Seconded by Guy Delorme

Motion approved.

6. President's Report

Kim Vance, President, reported to the membership as follows:

The thrust of my work over the past year has been to engage with the rest of the board/staff around sustainability of the organization in between festival years, and to continue to monitor the effects of the pandemic and adapt our work to accommodate the needs of our members. No one could have predicted that in late 2021 we would still be dealing with pandemic restrictions such that we were forced to make the difficult decision to postpone the Halifax festival until 2023. We know this decision had a profound effect on our choral communities across Canada, ranging from relief to disappointment. With the continued creative vision of my fellow board and staff members, we were able to both continue enhanced communication among our membership, like the monthly virtual roundtables, and provide some vision to keep up our spirits lifted through developing a new fundraising plan, a Unison awards programme, and a virtual leadership conference for the fall of 2022, as well as forging ahead with new commissions.

2021 was also a test of the restructuring work that took place in 2020, which involved rolling out a new membership structure. Despite some last-minute flurry of membership renewals and payments over this past weekend (which mostly fell on Liz and Cora – thank you!), I'd like to announce on behalf of the board, that 17 choruses have renewed their membership along with 19 (and counting) individual members.

We have a small decline since last year, which I believe can mostly be attributed to the impact of the pandemic on individual choirs, rather than Unison's new membership structure.

We had intended that 2021 would bring an increased emphasis on festival planning, and certainly early in the year, things were moving along according to plan. The Festival Planning Committee Co-Chair, Bob Millar, will provide an update later in the meeting about the rescheduled 2023 festival. Late in 2021, I stepped down as festival Co-Chair, due to both a physical move from Halifax to Kelowna, and also a desire to focus more fully on my co-artistic director role for the Festival, and my duties as president of the board and chair of the Purge Commissions working group.

As a follow-up to last year's report, we submitted two successful amendments to our grant with the LGBT Purge Fund, allowing us to both enhance and expand our work on the commissioning of three new choral works related to the theme of the purge.

The commissions are in the final stages of editing and having heard them and been part of the whole collaborative process from the beginning, I can assure you that this will be a moving highlight to the closing ceremonies of the festival and a unique opportunity for mass choir participants.

I continue to do public-facing activities as President that have assisted with the branding of Unison as a national network. This has included virtual messages of congratulations around choir anniversaries and a couple of in-person speeches at holiday concerts in December.

I would like to thank all board members for their contributions to an incredible and emotional and tumultuous year of Unison activity. A special shout-out goes out to our always reliable Secretary, Vince, our hard-working Treasurer, Liz, and our always creative VP, Yohei. And finally, it's not an exaggeration to say that Unison simply would not have achieved all its great work this year without the extraordinary effort of our Administrator, Cora. We know this hasn't been easy for Cora in recent months and we appreciate both her ability to delegate when needed and still provide what she could to keep us on track. A huge thanks to all of you!

7. Treasurer's report

The Financial Statements for 2020-2021 were distributed to the membership in advance of the AGM. Liz Graves, Treasurer, reported to the membership as follows:

The board has operated on a prudent budget with the rescheduling of the Unison Festival and limited resources available, spending only where necessary to continue to operate and meeting financial commitments and obligations. The board is seeking new funding opportunities by way of grants, donations and sponsorships that will allow us the funding to grow and develop new activities and programs for our members.

Donations for last year totaled \$3266. This doubles the amount from the year before. Liz thanked the individuals and choruses who supported Unison with these financial gifts.

Liz provided an overview of numbers reported in the Financial Statements for 2020-2021, which cover October 1, 2020 to September 30, 2021.

Statement of Financial Position

Assets total \$72,408

Liabilities total \$69,583

Unrestricted Net Assets \$2,824

Deferred revenue \$62,617 (chorus festival registrations to date and specified donations towards the festival) – these will be realized as revenue when festival operations begin again

Statement of Operations

Revenue \$25,899

(Legacy fund)	\$11,746
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Membership Dues	\$ 1,410
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Donations	\$ 3,266
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Purge Fund Grant	\$ 9,477
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Expenses \$36,923

Festival Planning	\$11,746
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Administration	\$ 7,594
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Insurance	\$ 3881
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Other Operating Costs	\$ 4226
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Operating deficit \$11,025

8. Acceptance of 2020 – 2021 Financial Statements

Gayle MacDonald motioned to accept the financial statements as presented.

Seconded by Keith (Tone Cluster)

Motion approved.

Kim acknowledged Liz's work as Unison Treasurer.

9. Appointment of public accountant

Kim noted that Unison proposes to continue using Scase & Partner of Calgary.

Len Cousineau motioned to approve the appointment of Scase & Partner of Calgary, Alberta as auditors of the Corporation's 2021-2022 Financial Statements.

Seconded by Kari

Motion approved.

10. Nomination of Board candidates

Kim noted that nine sitting directors are continuing on the board, into year two of their two-year terms which leaves six positions open for election. The term for the board is two years.

The following outgoing directors were nominated for re-election:

- Kim Vance (moved by Len, seconded by Corinne)
- Kirk Kryvenchuk (moved by Keith, seconded by Yohei)
- Liz Graves (moved by Mateo, seconded by Janey)
- Susanne Litke (moved by Kirsty, seconded by Gayle)
- Vince Ciarlo (moved by Bob, seconded by Dan)

Bob Millar nominated Tim Cross from Halifax Gay Men's Chorus and Nova Scotia Choral Federation to the Board of Directors. Nomination seconded by Len.

11. Election of directors

Len motioned to acclaim the slate of six candidates to the Board of Directors.

Seconded by Keith.

Motion approved.

Kim congratulated all those who were acclaimed to the board.

As the new board member, Tim Cross introduced himself to the delegates.

12. Other business

a. Festival Planning Committee – Bob Millar

Bob noted that the Halifax Festival runs from May 19 – 22, 2023. The festival logo has been updated with the new year for the festival. The Convention Centre has been rebooked without penalty.

Zack Nicholson, VP of HGMC, has joined the festival planning committee. Tim Cross joins the committee as Co-Chair with Bob. Five staff positions need to be filled for the Festival (event coordinator, assistance event coordinator, accessibility coordinator, communications coordinator, fundraising and volunteer coordinator).

The committee is working with Discover Halifax to organize hotels, RFPs are being sent out and site visits are being scheduled. Bob also noted that Halifax Pride will assist in planning social events during the festival.

March 27, 2022, is the next Festival Planning Committee

b. Global Alliance of Queer Choirs – Gianluca Ragazzini

Gianluca introduced the Alliance.

The purpose of this organization is for regional organizations to share information, facilitate international collaborations, build awareness, promote festivals, and support the creation of new regional organizations and choruses.

c. Leadership Conference Planning – Matthew Gillespie

Matthew announced that a virtual Unison symposium will be held on October 15.

There will be three topics of conversation – three guest speakers discussing fundraising, diversity, and trans voices. There will be an audio-visual presentation on Unison 2023 and a sneak peek of the Purge Fund Commissions. Unison is finalizing registration fees for members to participate in the symposium.

13. Closing

Meeting concluded at 7:00 p.m. EDT.

Unison Board of Directors for 2022 (15 members)

Bob Millar (Halifax, NS)
Gayle MacDonald (Halifax, NS)
Gianluca Ragazzini (Ottawa, ON)
Kim Vance-Mubanga (Kelowna, BC)
Kirk Kryvenchuk (Edmonton, AB)
Kristy Griffiths (Oxbridge, ON)
Len Cousineau (Vancouver, BC)
Liz Graves (Calgary, AB)
Matteo Esteves (Montreal, QC)
Matthew Gillespie (Calgary, AB)
Phil Mahar (Toronto, ON)
Susanne Litke (Halifax, NS)
Tim Cross (Halifax, NS)
Vince Ciarlo (Toronto, ON)
Yohei Sakai (Calgary, AB)