**True Concord Voices & Orchestra**

**Minutes of Board Retreat  
September 22, 2018  
Dusenberry-River Public Library**

Present: Eve Shapiro, David Nix, Julia Pernet, Sue Markovich, Eloise Fredrickson, Nancy March, Mary Lou Forier, Andy Watson, Andy Robson, Eric Holtan, Clyde Kunz, Mary McClurkin, Joshua Keeling.

The retreat was called to order by Clyde Kunz, chair.

1. Previous meeting minutes were approved as corrected.
   1. Corrections: change Sue Markovich to Andy Robson in attendance, change wording of “chairman” to “chair.”
2. Board notebooks were distributed and contents reviewed.
   1. Website portal passwords are given on the first page.
   2. Committee meetings should be scheduled using the online calendar in the board portal.
   3. Committees should meet at least a week before general board meetings.
   4. The Board Manual is in need of an update.
   5. The strategic plan is included; preparations for a new strategic plan will begin this year.
   6. The Audience Development meeting summary is included as an example of the format that committees should use for meetings: a one page, bulleted summary.
   7. Andy Watson should be added to the Governance Committee.
3. Overview of True Concord Operations – Eric Holtan
   1. Eric reviewed the name, mission, vision, and identity of True Concord.
      1. True Concord is roughly in the middle in terms of artist pay scale compared to other similar ensembles around the country.
      2. Instrumentalists are mostly brought in from the Tucson Symphony: True Concord’s compensation rate is 10% below TSO’s rate, with the goal of parity in the next 2 years.
      3. A new role has been added this year: Vice Chair, Artistic Engagement: Nancy March.
      4. True Concord is accommodating a growing audience by performing in larger venues this year.
      5. More outreach projects have been added this year: True Concord’s presentation in performances of Messiah and the St. Matthew Passion in Tucson and Phoenix.
      6. Staff: the Production Logistics Coordinator and Assistant Director positions are still in the process of being filled. The Assistant Director position will rotate from concert to concert this year.
4. Board Report – Clyde Kunz
   1. Consent Agenda: Clyde would like to move to a consent agenda format, with the agenda being published in advance of meetings, saving more time for productive discussion by eliminating lengthy reports.
   2. Artist Dinner assignments – Sue Markovich volunteered to coordinate the scheduling of dinner providers for double-header rehearsals such as Tuesday October 16.
   3. Lapsed subscriber calls – board members will make their yearly calls to lapsed subscribers (Andy Robson will be out of country). The lapsed subscriber list will be provided soon.
   4. International Advisory Council – This council will be formed to consult on musical matters such as quotes and interviews. Dale Warland will be invited to the council.
5. New Website Overview – Mary McClurkin
   1. Mary gave an walk-through of the new websites design and functions, highlighting the ticketing function and the board, musician, and volunteer portals. Several comments were given (Josh is maintaining the website and will make recommended changes):
      1. Some found it difficult to find the Messiah performances. It was suggested that the “True Concord in Your Neighborhood” heading be changed to “Messiah.”
      2. A “Back” button should be added to each Board member’s bio and in other locations to ease navigation.
      3. The idea of seating reservations on online ticket purchases was brought up: this will be reviewed again later.
6. 2017-18 Year-End Financials Overview – Mary Lou Forier, Eric Holtan, Joshua Keeling
   1. Last year’s final standings look to be about $1000 positive.
   2. Season ticket sales this year look to be about 21% higher than the previous year to date.
   3. 3-concert subscriptions are also considerably higher than last year’s, with one effect being that this year’s income does not match the increase in number of season subscriptions sold: income is approx. 6% higher than last year.
   4. The season ticket renewal rate is around 55%. Board member calls to lapsed subscribers should help improve this rate.
7. Artistic Updates – Eric Holtan
   1. *Vanek Fund for Excellence* – this fund aims to allow True Concord to commission and record every year. This year, True Concord will record a Christmas CD and special, which will be aired on Public Radio International.
   2. True Concord aims to perform more across the country as a presented ensemble (such as performances at universities and other presenting venues).
   3. 2026 will be the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution (“USA250,” a planning alliance in Philadelphia which is coordinating nationwide events in recognition of the anniversary). True Concord strives to be a part of this project
      1. Eric suggests a composer commissioning project in all 50 states, along with 50-state performing tour.
8. Vision of the Future

Through a visioning exercise, individual retreat participants were asked to visualize the major accomplishments they saw True Concord making in the next five years. This was done as a way of beginning to identify several “major goals” with which to begin a new strategic planning process.

Working in small groups, individuals compared notes and were asked to collectively come up with each group’s top five visionary statements. Each of the three small groups then shared with the entire assembly. The vision statements receiving the highest number of mentions (and which seemed to most resonate with all retreat participants) were these:

1. True Concord is performing regularly in regional, summer music festival, and even international performances.
2. The True Concord Board of Directors and staff have been expanded and diversified well beyond Tucson, Arizona.
3. True Concord is routinely making professional recordings, enjoys frequent radio play nationwide, and has received multiple GRAMMY nominations.
4. True Concord has a permanent home venue (for both performances and administration), recognized as being primarily True Concord’s venue.

Other suggestions that had come from the small groups included:

* Expanding and diversifying audience
* Expansion of artistic and administrative staff
* Development of a national choral music education program
* Establishing a True Concord “core” of singers who find working with True Concord highly desirable.

1. Executive Session

Retreat adjourned at 12:30PM by Clyde Kunz.

Respectfully submitted,

Joshua Keeling