

**Arlington Band Boosters**  
**General Membership Meeting Minutes**

March 8, 2023,

**Opening**

The General Membership meeting of the Arlington Band Boosters was called to order at 7:05 p.m. on March 8, 2023, at Arlington High School by Eileen Eckert.

**Present**

Eileen Eckert, Beverly Embry, Evan Rzodkiewicz, Nicole Raskopf, Janine Gwinn, Karen MacNish, Melissa Palestro, Alan Labouseur, and Rich Guillen.

**Approval of Minutes**

The minutes from February 2, 2023, ABBI General Meeting were distributed to the board members via email by Beverly Embry.

A motion was made to accept and approve February 2, 2023, meeting minutes was made by Eileen Eckert. It was approved by Nicole Raskopf and a second by Karen MacNish. Passed with a majority in favor of the board.

**Treasurer Report (Nicole Raskopf)**

Treasurer Report sent out via email to the ABBI Board on March 8, 2023.

Key items discussed:

- \$16,142.59 on page 2 is Tour Fees. A suggestion is to wait until they are all paid and then pull reports. It will take two hours to break down every single transaction.
- We are close to the budget for Adam's gift card sales.
- We had a budget of \$100 for winter merchandise. We sold \$6,000 this season. In previous years we have never had a markup on Tour Shirts. This year we did.
- We need to pay out expenses to Bert Cousins (winter guard coach)
- As of right now we have generic merchandise in the shop.

- We discussed whether uniform fees come out of the tour fees that are subsidized. Need to get clarification on this item.
- Suggestion on the floor to take 10% of surplus from funds raised and move it to the uniform fund.
- Discussion on Adam's fundraiser. We get 10% back. It can be split into 5% to cover tour fees and the other 5% goes to the Instrument fund. Generally, 10% goes straight to the Instrument fund. We do not get a check back from Adams for the 10%. It is given to us in the form of gift cards. i.e., we sell \$8525 in gift cards, we purchase \$7750, and Adams gives us \$775 in gift cards as the 10%.
- We need to find avenues to replenish the financial aid account. We will need to transfer funds to that account. Beverly mentioned the conversation from the February meeting and how the Directors were working with the district to help with this.
- Instrument fund is going to take a hit this year. The bands need instruments. We purchased a tuba about 2 years ago in the amount of \$10,000. The district may be able to help in smaller increments. Directors are working with the district.

A motion on the floor to approve and accept the February Treasurer Report was made by Eileen Eckert. It was approved by Alan Labouseur and a second by Karen MacNish.

**Vice President Report: (Eileen Eckert and Mr. Rich Guillen (Director))**

- Eileen went over Dave's letter regarding the proposal for the 6-day rotation in the music program trying to be implemented in the elementary school program. ABBI is taking a stand against the proposal. Mr. Guillen spoke about the proposed new 6-day rotation schedule. They attempted this idea in 2019. Some key takeaways from Mr. Guillen:
  - Students will get 3 lessons a month instead of 4. There becomes an accumulation of lost instructional time with the students.
  - The decision was rushed. There is no malicious intent. How can we ensure the students will not lose out?

- The proposal came from the principals of all the schools. The school board does not have to grant permission. They simply presented it to the board and made it public without informing the music departments.
- Superintendent meeting- Music departments asked to have the proposal removed from the agenda and they did not remove it. It snowed so the meeting was postponed. Music coordinators will meet to go over the proposal. Over the course of two years, children will lose 20% of instructional time. Students now have 2 band classes and 1 lesson a week. The proposal will convert to 2 band classes every 6 days and 1 lesson every 6 days. The result will be less contact time with the student.
- Eileen asked if there will be a loss of staffing due to the proposal. Currently, no loss of staff.
- Mr. Rzodkiewicz spoke with Dave Kamen last week. This is not a voteable issue.

**Some concessions and other information the music department is looking for are as follows:**

- Fourth grade have a September start. This will provide more contact time.
- 40-minute lesson time. Can they make a 40-minute schedule with the number of kids? A 40- minute will be more than the 30-minute instructional time as before.
- Groups of 5 to 6 students are suitable to be together.
- Remind App to help the students remember.
- **PLC- Professional Learning Community** Mr. Keech, Mr. Guillen, and Mr. Rzodkiewicz are part of the PLC.
- Biggest concern was the loss of instructional and contract time.
- Parents need to be vocal about this proposal.
- People move here and teach here for the music program.

- Karen MacNish ask Mr. Guillen what his thoughts were about the proposal. And what are we advocating for?
  - He thought it was better than what he thought it was going to be. He feels the administrators in the district are new, especially over the past two years.
  - Teachers like the 5-day schedule. The identity of the district is the strong music program. Music teachers feel invisible at the school level. Retention of children maybe become an issue down the road. Everyone feels comfortable with what they know with the current 5-day schedule.
  - Please refrain from using “this is the way it has always been done” when discussing at the meeting.
  - The system is broken for the schedulers and no one else.
  - Another argument with the six-day pilot is renting an instrument with less time to play.
  - It is worth discussing with the board even with the concessions. Once they go to a 6-day they make take back some of the concessions.
  - This will hurt those students that can’t afford lessons and have no access to the internet.
  - Administrators are presenting rosy scenarios to the board that is not necessarily true.
  - ABBI and ASOA should present together next meeting. No consultation with the music department.
  - We have also been encouraging our members to speak up about the proposed changes to the elementary band, chorus, and orchestra schedules either by speaking during public comment at next week’s meeting or by sending an email to the Board of Education.

**Mr. Guillen will send the board the elementary school teachers’ proposals and music department documents for us to review.**

- Board Agenda- public comment first and one at the end. Have ABBI and ASOA present at the first open comment.
- ASOA went to the membership and not to the board.
- Mr. Guillen is sending Karen MacNish the letter and the agenda.

**Communications: (Janine Gwinn)**

- Newsletter went out to 1656 emails. This included alumni and the 2020 webathon. Roughly, 33% of the emails were opened. We would like to set up the GoFundMe page for the uniforms. We need the cost of the uniforms. Timing is everything. Anine asked everyone to check their emails because a lot of people did not get the email. We should be at roughly 3000 emails going out. We will use communication or treasurer email for the GoFundMe page. Janine will prepopulate the information into the GFM page and start at \$20,000.
- Mr. Keech's rough estimate from Fred J Miller is about \$100,000 for new uniforms. We need to get this information out there so ABBI can raise funds.
- Mr. Guillen mentioned the last uniforms were covered by a \$25,000 Pepsi grant and the district matched the grant.
- Will advocating against the 6-day proposal hurt ABBI from getting funds or assistance from the district? Question from Janine Gwinn.

Eileen mentioned our next meeting is April 13<sup>th</sup> and will need to discuss the nomination for the board and the budget for the upcoming year.

**Director's Report: (Mr. Guillen)**

- Mr. Guillen thanked ABBI for their financial assistance for the Jazz Machine to go to the Mid-Atlantic Jazz Festival. It cost each student \$300 to go. The cost of the coach bus was twice as much.
- Jazz Cab meetings will be held on the 13<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> of March. The previous meetings were snowed out. Information will be out on FB and the ABBI website.
- NYSSMA Central Zone we will be hosting. BOCES Arts and Ed money will be coming to ABBI and then back out to pay the bill.

- Guest Conductor concerts this week. Because we are using in-house conductors there is no additional practice time. The POPS concert will be coming up next week.

### **Winter Guard Liaison: (Eileen Eckert)**

- Home Show is on Sunday, and we are ready to go. At the time of the meeting, the auction was already \$1,000 over last year. Everything is being set up in the music lobby. Come joins us at 4:30 p.m. on Sunday. The cost is \$10 per person.
- Clothing drive is on March 26<sup>th</sup>. We are getting .17 cents per pound.
- Guard is going to Dayton, Ohio, and can be seen on FloMarching.
- We went to the WGI Philly Regional. We were 1<sup>st</sup> in the show for prelims and finished 4<sup>th</sup> overall in finals.
- Eileen will reach out to Paula Wraftner about the proposal. Eileen read her email to the group. Text from the email as follows: We are preparing for our POPS Concert on March 16 at 7 pm. Discounted tickets are on sale online until March 15, but tickets can also be purchased at the door.
- We need bodies at the board meeting standing there in their music gear to show support. Karen will write up a letter to present at the meeting.
- Eileen will speak at the Guest Conductor concert on March 9<sup>th</sup> about ABBI.
- Eileen will send out some information about the upcoming school board meeting.
- As of right now we have Dave and Karen's letter and members coming to support.
- We have also been encouraging our members to speak up about the proposed changes to the elementary band, chorus, and orchestra schedules either by speaking during public comment at next week's meeting or by sending an email to the Board of Education.

### **Old Business:**

- Nicole, Alan, and Mr. Rzodkiewicz meet to go over the E-commerce transactions in Square.
- Board seats:
  - Lisa Sassi has agreed to be nominated for a board seat. She will also take over merchandise next season.
  - Beverly will send out the current slate to the board with the seats that are up for election.
  - Discussed the following people leaving at the end of 2024: Nicole Raskopf, Beverly Embry, Eileen Eckert, Dave Kamen, and Alan Labouseur.
- Need to find all Square devices for Jazz Cab. (Alan) We have 3 tap devices that Rob, Nicole, and Lisa have. We are charged 2.6% on tap devices and 2.9% for swipe devices. We need to invest in more tap devices.
- We discussed the cost of the fees on ABBI, and we need to figure out a way to incorporate these fees into the paying customer. To date, ABBI has paid \$3,149.00 in fees since switching to Square. Can we do an offer to pay the fee for the Square feature? We need to investigate.

## **Adjournment**

A motion to adjourn the ABBI general meeting at 8:41 p.m. by Eileen Eckert. It was accepted by Alan Labousuer and second by Karen MacNish. All board members were in favor.

Minutes submitted by: Beverly Embry