

## The Symphony Guild of Charlotte, Inc.

### General Meeting (Fall) Minutes September 26, 2017

President Mike Rutledge called the meeting to order at 5:55 pm at the home of Lisa Phillips, 2242 Pinewood Circle.

**CSO Report** – Mary Deissler, President and CEO of the Charlotte Symphony spoke of the successes and challenges of the past year and future plans for the symphony.

- The Gala fundraiser on the night of the piano concert raised over \$400,000. The CSO was challenged by the recent cancellation by Lang Lang because of an injury. He was to be replaced by Yefim Bronfman, who cancelled the weekend before the concert because of his mother's death. In spite of the late date and hurricane weather, the CSO was able to bring Jeremy Denk to Charlotte to perform in an outstanding concert.
- The CSO finished its season in June with the largest surplus in the 21<sup>st</sup> century – a 6-figure surplus. The struggling Arts and Science Council has cut its \$760,000 grant to the CSO by \$150,000. It has also cut grants to other arts organizations. Also, a major multi-year multi-million dollar grant will expire in 2021, and the CSO must find a way to make up a gap of \$2 million in the next 3 years.
- A new contract was negotiated with the musicians, and they received an 8% raise. A new contract was negotiated with the musicians, and they received an 8% raise. Some musicians retired, and the CSO now has 59 full time orchestra members with 3 openings being kept open.
- The musicians will be performing more than in December in past years. This new schedule will also allow a possible New Year's Eve concert in the future. The contract runs through 2021.
- Concerts have been added in all parts of the city, and Sunday afternoon concerts have been added in some months. There is a small series in Ballantyne and concerts in Rock Hill, and there are also concerts at retirement communities. The CSO is working with Queens' music therapy department on a program for Alzheimer's patients.
- The CSO is developing a legacy campaign headed by Robin Cochran and Rich Osborne.
- In May there will be another pro-am concert, which was very popular this year.
- On November 8, 2018 the CSO will celebrate Charlotte's 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary by spearheading a festival featuring all forms of art.
- The 7:30 pm start to concerts is a result of a wish to provide easier access for those who work uptown.

The meeting adjourned temporarily at 6:15 pm for dinner. Connor May Kelly, a CSYO harpist, played during the social and dinner hours. Wine was provided by The Guild, which has many donated bottles stored; a few members brought appetizers or desserts. Most members paid \$10 for the enjoyable baked potato and salad supper, which the membership committee prepared. Asking most members to pay instead of bringing food and wine is a change from previous general meeting food plans.

The meeting was again called to order by Mike Rutledge at 6:45 pm. The minutes of the spring meeting on May 17, 2017 were presented. Linda Borders moved that the minutes be accepted, Robin Cochran seconded, and the minutes were approved.

Mike announced that Jeanna Norris, President of the CSYO Parents Association was selling Virginia Diner products and Auto Bell gift cards to benefit the youth orchestras.

**Treasurer's Report** – Susan Carr, Treasurer

- Last year the Guild ended the year with an \$8,000 surplus. Expenses during the year were higher than budgeted, but income from the Kitchen Tour was even higher than budgeted, making the year a good one financially. SGC gave the CSO a \$10,000 donation, the amount budgeted.
- Renewals are less than budgeted, but we are pleased that so many CSYO parents have joined the Guild.
- Current funds appear low, because while SGC paid for the expensive Youth Camp in this fiscal year, the 6-month delay of the Kitchen Tour income causes the accounts to be lower than usual. It is hoped that the Kitchen Tour in March will replenish our funds.

Lisa Phillips moved to accept the Treasurer's report, Stephanie Stenglein seconded the motion, and the report was approved.

**Membership** – Leigh Finley, VP

- Directories are ready for distribution, and many were given out at the meeting.
- The usual holiday party will be held in January instead of December.

**Management and Planning** – Elizabeth Connor Stewart – no report

**Education** – Beth Garges, VP

- The 23<sup>rd</sup> Youth camp at Converse College took place in August and was very successful. Expenses were under budget.
- Mini-camp for the JYO will be held October 8 at St. Luke's Church. SGC pays coaching expenses of \$1600, and the Parents Organization prepares snack bags for the students.
- The Scholarship Committee under Betty Seifert awarded tuition assistance to 8 Youth orchestra members. The deadline for private study scholarship applications is 10/15.
- The status of Youth Festival and Young Artists is uncertain at this point. Youth Festival must become less expensive, and the concert must be shortened. The CSO and SGC are working on a plan to achieve those goals. Young Artists is not set, because no decision has been made regarding prizes for the winners; grand prize winners have played with the CSO in the past, but the uncertainty of the youth festival makes planning difficult. Donna Kiser, VP, is working with Paul Nitsch at Queens to find a date.
- The Musical Petting Zoo has no chairman, and it has been difficult to get volunteers, particularly those who would lead the Zoo sessions. The need for PZ at Lollipops is for only 2 concerts. One set of instruments is stored at Donna Kiser's, and those will be removed. Another set is stored at ImaginOn, but to maintain that agreement, we must provide appearances at ImaginOn. If anyone is willing to store instruments, chair the MPZ, or volunteer for any zoo position, please contact Beth Garges or Donna Kiser.

### **Marketing – no VP**

- John and Zulima Lee resigned from their marketing VP positions, and much of the marketing will be done by Victoria Gilmore with the help of Mary Staton.

### **Fundraising – Robin Cochran, VP**

- October 12 from 5 to 7 there will be an evening at Rountree Plantation to raise funds. There will be wine and cheese, and Rountree will present suggestions for fall planting. Robin asked that members support this event, because with a fall Kitchen Tour, SGC needs available cash.
- Kitchen Tour – see later

### **Old Business**

#### **New Business**

- MPZ – Chris Stonnell at the CSO would like to offer a small version of the PZ at the Harry Potter concert on Saturday. The CSO can obtain instruments from the Winterfield Elementary program but needs volunteers to work.
- Youth Festival and Young Artists – a small advisory group has been formed to review the costs. The Youth Festival is on the CSO calendar. The committee hopes to present a suggestion to the Board in October.

### **Kitchen Tour – Linda Weisbruch, Lisa Phillips, Sallie Moody**

- Linda Weisbruch handed out a sheet of Kitchen Tour information specifics. The Taste of the Tour Party and Auction will be held from 6 to 9 on Thursday 3/14 at Ferguson's. A new feature of the tour will be the Cocktail Tour on Friday night 3/15 from 6 to 9. Houses can be toured during those hours, and a different beverage will be offered at each house. The day tour will be Saturday 3/16 from 10 to 4.
- Honorary Chairs for the Kitchen Tour will be Leslie and Bruce Schlernitzauer, owners of Porcupine Provisions Caterers. Their home will also be on the tour.
- No additional volunteer shifts will be needed, because there will be fewer houses with extended hours. Volunteer needs will remain the same as in the past. Tickets will be continuous through Friday and Saturday – what houses aren't seen Friday can be seen Saturday.
- Betty Seifert is in charge of Logistics/operations.
- Sallie Moody, Rosa Dest, and Linda Weisbruch are securing houses to be toured. There are 4 confirmed homes with 2 more to come. Houses are in fairly close proximity.
- Cookie Parnell is gathering chefs for shifts at each house. So far 3 chefs are returning. Barbara Kopald is helping secure chefs from her home in San Diego.
- Mary Holloway, Jenny Tolson, and Linda Weisbruch are planning the party.
- Mary Staton will guide the marketing.
- Lisa Phillips is in charge of overall planning.
- Robin Cochran is heading the Chairman's Circle.
- Sallie Moody and Jenny Tolson, who chaired last year's auction are helping this year. Last year there were 159 items with a total value of \$30,000, and \$18,000 was earned from the sale. The goal this year is to earn \$15,000. The 20 members who solicited last year will be asked again.

- Volunteers are needed to chair the Auction, to help move items to Ferguson, to print the items' certificates, to help set up items, and to help check out buyers.
- ALL ACTIVE MEMBERS (EXCEPT CSYO PARENT MEMBERS) ARE REQUIRED TO PURCHASE \$75 WORTH OF KITCHEN TOUR TICKETS. THAT CAN BE 3 TOUR TICKETS AT \$25 EACH OR A COMBINATION WITH PARTY TICKETS, WHICH WILL BE \$50 EACH. THERE WILL BE A SPECIAL LOWER PRICE FOR GUEST UNDER AGE 35.
- Sign-up sheets for Kitchen Tour jobs were available at the meeting, and many members signed up. Active members are required to work on the project in some capacity.
- Sallie Moody talked about ways to solicit merchants for donations for the Auction. Auction packets are available for members to give to possible donors; the packets contain much information about the Guild, the project, and the details of the event and benefits to donors. These packets are available to anyone who will solicit donors.
- If you are planning to solicit, please ask the Auction spreadsheet person (Carol Follmer), if anyone else is planning to solicit the same donor.
- Consider soliciting for not only items but for unique services or restaurants. If you plan to solicit any food-related establishment, ask if this person might consider providing food for the Taste of the Tour party.
- When you visit a possible donor, ask for what you would like, ask when they might be ready to make a decision, and leave the donor packet.
- Lisa Phillips is putting together past information to create a project plan for the future. Victoria is working with her on this plan.

#### **LAO (League of American Orchestras) –**

- Linda Weisbruch explained that this organization is composed of about 900 large and small orchestras in the US, Canada, and some other countries. It holds an annual conference to share ideas. Linda has served 8 years on a Volunteer Council that shares ideas and gives awards for projects produced by volunteers. SGC submitted a report on the 2016 Taste of the Tour Auction to be considered for an award.

#### **SOVA (Southeastern Orchestra Volunteer Association) –**

- Betty Seifert is our representative and will attend the annual conference in Charleston on Columbus Day weekend.

#### **Announcements**

- Marta Fales will now be the Member Support Chair to send cards. Please contact Marta, if you know of a member who can benefit from support.
- Beth Garges said the Board voted to establish a scholarship in memory of Kit Ramage, former Guild President. Donations to this fund can be forwarded to Susan Carr, and be sure to put on the memo line of your check a note saying it's for the Kit Ramage gift. The scholarship will be awarded at youth Festival, and its establishment is timely because of the end of the Hutchins and Knight scholarships. Donations for this scholarship can also be given online.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:35 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Carol Follmer, Secretary