



*Promoting Blues
Education & Music*

P.O. Box 3202
Madison, WI 53704-0202
info@madisonbluessociety.com
www.madisonbluessociety.com

**Madison Blues Society
Monthly Board Meeting
January 8, 2018, Village Lanes, Monona**

Attendance:

Board Members Shari Davis, Christine Johnson, Pamela Bean, Peter Gill, and Julie Ethridge. MBS Members Susie Launder, Charlie Lemm, Jim Bean and Virginia Rose

Minutes:

Secretary Peter Gill had emailed board members the minutes from the Dec. 4 monthly meeting and Dec. 11 monthly meeting, and asked if anyone had changes or corrections. Christine and Susie had no changes; Shari said she would review and respond within a couple days; Chris Kalmbach was absent due to illness. The board discussed the best and fastest way to handle approval of minutes so members could view them in a timely manner. They agreed that email is the preferred method of communication among board members and that minutes could be approved via email to expedite the process.

Board Make-Up:

New member Virginia Rose expressed interest in joining the MBS Board. While the annual meeting (held a month earlier) is the only time of year board members are elected and MBS bylaws state only that new board members can only be appointed to replace a board member who resigns, there was discussion about changes to those bylaws and how new board members are added. President Christine Johnson said at some point in the next couple of months, we may address any number of items regarding the bylaws, which were last updated in 2013. In the meantime, Christine said members are welcome to participate in board committees. Pamela volunteered to spearhead potential changes to the bylaws and Julie offered to help. Board members were asked to send any suggested bylaw changes to Pamela. Shari Davis said she will forward the bylaws in document form.

Treasurer's Report:

In lieu of a treasurer, Christine handed out both November and December monthly reports as well as year-end reports for 2015 and 2016. Christine pointed out that the MBS has less cash-on-hand than in previous year-ends: \$12,118 in 2017 (which doesn't include a \$1,500 grant received after Dec. 31) compared to \$14,000 in 2016 and \$19,000 in 2015. She also passed out grant information from three of the past four years. Christine said we need more sponsorships and grants, highlighting the cost of the park rental (\$3,500) and musicians (\$5,500). The park permit is likely going up, there are insurance costs and other expenses, she explained, adding that MBS needs people to solicit business sponsorships. The board discussed the strong need for sponsorships, with members pointing out the lack of sponsorships and the near-ideal weather conditions creating a small loss for MBS from the 2017 Picnic. Charlie Lemm volunteered to spearhead the grant applications; Julie and Pete agreed to tag-team the sponsorship portion of fundraising.

Website:

Christine talked about the need for updating the MBS website and the lack of resources to do it. In the past, long-time former Board Member Tim Davis was our webmaster. But Christine explained it isn't a

user-friendly system and said MBS needs to lower the bar on the type of system so any board or MBS member can quickly update the webpage. Pamela suggested asking her friend, and the developer of Pam's business website, Katherine Ramirez, to help. Katherine's company targets organizations with low budget and works with interns who can afford to update the websites at a low cost. Pam set up a meeting with Katherine on Jan. 18 to discuss. Board members with interest or skills in this area were invited to attend. Although the budget is tight, Christine said we need a better website if we're going to solicit sponsorships, so we should see this as an investment no matter how we choose to proceed. Julie also suggested looking at one or two other options as far as the content management system.

Social Media:

Christine told the board she heard from a live music promoter about a Jonny Lang concert coming to Madison. The promoter agreed to offer four free tickets (two pairs) in exchange for some publicity. Christine said MBS will offer the tickets to members in a Facebook contest. Christine will continue to be the point person for social media with Charlie Lemm helping with occasional posts. Julie also offered to help with social media (as she does this as part of her professional work). Our page "likes" have increased in the two years Christine has been handling it, from 879 on Jan. 11, 2016 to 1,458 on Jan. 8, 2018, a 77 percent increase. These are organic (non-paid) "likes." During the weeks prior to the Blues Picnic the MBS can pay for promotion for a nominal fee.

Music Committee:

Susie Launder, chair of the music committee (and out-going Board member) discussed how the music committee developed its list of recommendations for Picnic bands. She said the process used to be long and drawn-out. This year the committee met once to discuss which bands they wanted to consider and meet a second time to listen to them. The goal is to hire two local, two regional and one headliner for the Picnic in June. The next step in the process is handled by Chris Kalmbach, who serves as the Board's purchasing agent. Once Chris finds out the costs and availability, the music committee will recommend the selected bands to the MBS Board. The goal is to have a decision and contracts out by the beginning of February. Christine thanked Susie for her work on the music committee as well as her service to the MBS as a board member for the last two years.

Blues Kids:

Susie said the MBS was working with the Boys and Girls Club of Dane County to put together a Blues Kids portion of the Picnic. Shari is closely involved in the Blues Kids program and said she would be in contact with the Boys and Girls Clubs' contact person, Dan Hawk. MBS member Vivian Deegan Schmelzer has also offered to assist in the program.

Community Donations:

The board discussed donations to both the Madison Public Library and the Dane County Boys and Girls Club last year. At Chris Kalmbach's request, Christine has asked MBS Library Chair Kate Hardy to follow-up with the library about the circulation numbers for the items being purchased with the MBS \$500 annual donation to ensure the purchased materials, identified as being purchased with MBS funds, are actually being used by library patrons. In general, the board decided that this year all donations will be made in the last quarter of the year, to ensure we make them after fulfilling all other MBS obligations.

Blues Picnic:

Christine agreed to be the point person for the Picnic until a volunteer steps up to lead the event. Susie is continuing to lead the vendors portion of the picnic. She will draft a letter to potential vendors, letting them know picnic planning is beginning.

Board Officer Elections:

Each January, the new board elects executive officers: President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer as per MBS bylaws. In 2017, Christine served as President, Shari was Vice-President and Pete was Secretary. There has been no treasurer since May when Tom Blaskey resigned.

Nominations for officers in 2018 were as follows: **Christine Johnson for President; Pam Bean for Vice-President; Julie Ethridge for Secretary; and Peter Gill for Treasurer.** All four were unanimously elected to those positions.

Announcements:

Charlie Lemm informed the Board of the “Madison Reunion” event to take place this summer, celebrating the 50th anniversary of the summer of 1968.

Adjournment:

Pete made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Julie and after a unanimous vote, the meeting was adjourned at 8:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter Gill, MBS Secretary