

**Approved Minutes
FAI Board Meeting call
10/8/15**

In attendance:

Michelle Conceison (left 2:49)	Joan Kornblith	Kelli Wetzel
Mary Sue Twohy	Tim McFadden (1:09)	Erika Wollam-Nicols (1:09)
Matt Smith	Michael Kornfeld (1:09)	Ellen Stanley (1:09)
Donald Davidoff	David Hirshland (1:13)	Amy Ritenour
Lisa Schwartz	Anya Siglin Sadler	Jean Spivey
Renee Bodie (left 2:40)	Ralph Jaccodine	Dan Navarro
Jenni Finlay (1:25)		

Aengus Finnan, Executive Director

Meeting called to order at 1:07PM ET by President Michelle Conceison who then announced rules for the meeting and the process to request being put on list to contribute to discussion.

Matt Smith **MOVED** to accept minutes from both the August 12, 2015 Board Meeting call and the September 15, 2015 ExComm call. Jean Spivey **seconded**. Sensing no objection, motion **CARRIED**.

Executive Director's Report

Aengus reported that membership is up 7% as of end of the month and 17% year over year. We have 2,310 total memberships with 217 new (82%) and 49 renewing (18%). There is \$18,950 is dues revenue.

The new forward facing contact management system is proving successful with minimal issues or complaints.

Conference Registration: We are 193 registrations ahead of last year's pace year over year. Staff will be monitoring data on the first and fifteenth of the month to create more consistent milestones.

This year, the official showcase application process was shortened to three months. Due to the complexity of the online system, we were forced to extend the deadline for two

additional days. There was one formal complaint from a registrant about the extension that was handled by Aengus.

Last year's target of 739 applications was achieved within the shortened timeframe. We realized \$22K in revenue from applications working exclusively with our marketing system as we are no longer utilizing Sonic Bids.

Dan Navarro stated that he had received several calls from individuals who were upset about the shorted timeframe for showcase applications.

Aengus thanked Joan Kornblith for assisting with building the panels and workshops for the conference this year. Aengus also asked the Board to send suggested topics, themes, and panelists to he and Joan for consideration, utilizing last year's schedule and topics as reference.

Music Fair

The event will take place on Sunday of the Conference and has been shifted to primarily a public event. Since there is not much else going on in the area during February, we are hoping to attract locals and are publishing the Music Fair in area event calendars and with local leaders.

The exhibit hall will be replaced with an artisans marketplace similar to those found at festivals and an effort is being made to engage local artisans.

There will be three different rooms with workshop-style stages and a late afternoon headliner performance from an artist not performing at the conference in an effort to entice delegates to stay through Sunday. Please send suggestions for potential headliners to Aengus.

Winter Music Camp

Doug Cox was hired as Camp Director and has been coordinating with the office regarding logistics as well as collaborating with Aengus regarding crossover in programming and showcases.

The Camp will take place from 10am - 5pm on Thursday, Friday and Saturday of the conference and take place on the 2 floor (LINK level) of the Sheraton hotel exclusively. Mornings will focus on more intense and demanding instruction while the afternoons will have a more relaxed and less strenuous program with more group participation as the focus.

A number of instructors will also appear as official showcase artists.

The preliminary line up of instructors is posted on line.

AGM

There was significant discussion around when to hold the AGM to result in the greatest attendance. The bylaws state that the timing of the meeting is at the sole discretion of the Board. The goal is to increase interest and attendance and perhaps create a friendlier event that will allow members to meet the Board and invite engagement. Aengus will consider all options and communicate his thoughts with the Board.

Theme for 2017 Conference

Aengus unveiled the proposed theme for the 2017 Conference and suggested a Think Tank to further discuss and flesh out the possibilities. He will be sending around a Doodle Poll to schedule.

Publicist

Aengus has proposals from two final candidates for the Publicist position and intends to hire one of them in the next week.

Financial Reports

Donald Davidoff reviewed the newly formatted P&L statement (with only two months YTD) and the Balance Sheet. Currently, we have \$338,000 cash on hand.

Aengus informed us that the staff is 100% participating with donating to FAI and asked that the Board please make their donations prior to the end of the calendar year.

Folk Store

There was discussion around the costs to run the store. Aengus informed us that we are now isolating expenses to determine the actual cost to run the store to provide the most accurate information in order to make an informed decision about the relevance and viability of store itself. Even with active marketing, there is continual traffic but no sales

The store is still performing instrument repairs and beginning to build a loyal customer base for basic repair needs.

Staff is looking into getting more special events booked in the store, but hope to have regular performance events happening in store to increase traffic and sales.

People consistently remark that we have one of the nicest stores that they've ever seen,

and we are receiving great feedback from satisfied customers. This is crucial in this business because reputation is everything and ours is good and improving all the time.

The store discussion was tabled with the understanding that we need to resume dialogue prior to February meeting.

Site Selection Committee

Aengus has conducted preliminary site inspections for the 2019 Conference in Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto, and Vancouver. Calgary and Halifax are also being considered. A draft RFP has been reviewed by the Site Selection committee and an internal matrix has been developed to map out additional needs and aspects that play into a final decision.

Programming Committee

Showcase jury will be different this year in a couple of ways. There will be three juries: one for entries from Canada; one for international entries; and one for entries from the US. Aengus will oversee all of them.

Showcase submissions cut off at the end of September. Jury will vote and decide on those acts chosen in the first two weeks of October. The goal is to notify acts sooner so they are able to plan and get flights earlier than usual. Aengus noted that since this is a significant change from past years, we are being as respectful and mindful as possible and over-communicating with our constituents.

The showcase entries will all be managed through our site and controlled by us so all of the artist info will be in one place, the jury process will be more streamlined and the same for all three juries, and more efficient for the jury process itself. We also required more information from the artists than what was requested last year.

Programming committee will be working on panels and workshops and asked that the board assist by making suggestions of special speakers and artists for the conference, and also for the camp and fair.

Nominating Committee

We have three elected directors with terms expiring this year who all wish to run again: Michelle Conceison (NERFA); Ralph Jaccodine (NERFA); Lisa Schwartz (NERFA)

Doug Cox has stepped down since our last meeting. His seat is now vacant. Anya Siglin's (FARM) appointed term expires in February, and she is not interested in continuing on the Board. She is, however, planning to stay active as Chair of the site selection committee.

Donald Davidoff's (SWRFA) term also expires this year, and he has asked to be appointed again, rather than run for a term. David Hirshland has stated that he will be stepping down in February, so his seat will be vacant and available as of his resignation for the remainder of his term (two years).

The remainder of the Board consists of:

Renee Bodie-FARWEST (2017)
Jenni Finlay-SWRFA (2018)
Joan Kornblith –NERFA (2018)
Michael Kornfeld –NERFA (2017)
Tim McFadden-SERFA (2018)
Dan Navarro-FARWEST (2017)
Erika Wollam-Nichols-SERFA (2018)
Amy Reitnouer-FARWEST (2017)
Matt Smith – NERFA (2017)
Jean Spivey-SWRFA (2017)
Ellen Stanley-FARM (2018)
Mary Sue Twohy –NERFA (2017)
Keli O'Neill Wenzel-FARM (2017)

Joan Kornblith **MOVED** to accept the following election slate, Matt Smith **seconded**:

Michelle Conceison (NERFA)
Lisa Schwartz (NERFA)
Ralph Jaccodine (NERFA)
Matt the Electrician - Artist (aka Matt Sever) (SWRFA)
Tom Phillion – Programmer/Producer (SERFA)
Sheri Jones – Manager (NERFA/Canadian)
Alka Sharma – ED Folk Music Ontario (NERFA/Canadian)
John Kelley – Merchandiser/educator SERFA (works with INTL company)
There was no discussion. Motion **CARRIED** unanimously. Joan reminded us that members can be added to the slate by petition. She also requested that Michelle, Ralph, and Lisa update their 50 word bios as soon as possible.

Michelle congratulated the Nominating Committee on a job well done.

Advocacy Committee

The Copyright Subcommittee is still focusing on distribution of the white paper. Ellen emailed the Board, following up to get copies to individuals attending upcoming festivals and conferences. If Board Members need copies of the copyright paper sent to them,

please let Ellen know. Renee is emailing regional leaders, offering Board members to sit on copyright-related panels and papers to distribute at said panels. We are continuing to gather feedback on the copyright paper and reporting back any additions/revisions that should be made to the document down the road.

MusicFIRST has approached us about sending an email to membership about Fair Play Fair Pay Act and the subcommittee is looking at how we want to respond.

There is still interest in wanting to pursue a PRO deal with small venues. Aengus has called a think tank on that.

Health

Health-wellness and health insurance issues are important topics for all of our members. Health care and wellness issues are broad and often times confusing. In response, the Advocacy subcommittee would like to create a White Paper for our members to give some information, and a strong, list of resources for their use. Please send to Ralph any relevant links to local, regional, and international resources. Also send any testimonials or stories from any artist who will speak openly about their knowledge and experience. The goal is to have appropriate first-person references.

Air Travel

Since Doug has resigned from the Board and Mary Sue has expressed interest in getting more involved again in this area of advocacy, she will be taking over as the lead of this subcommittee.

Aengus is sharing the American Federation of Musicians' "Flying Handbook," which is a comprehensive guide for musicians traveling with instruments. FAI's "Tipsheet for Traveling Musicians" is a more synthesized version--a quick reference guide for musicians who are flying. The Air/Travel Subcommittee has discussed sharing it as a link on our Travel Tips web page.

The subcommittee is also looking at putting together a guide for musicians traveling outside the US, focusing first on Canada. If you know of anyone who could help write this white paper on Canadian air travel, please let Mary Sue know.

Visas/Immigration

FAI has now refined its policy providing letters of support for artists needing a Visa. This service is now available to member artists only. Aengus is continuing to gather information for a guide for international musicians traveling to the US.

Connections/Fund Development Committee

There will be a fundraising letter going out to current members by the end of the year. Aengus would like the board to donate earlier this fiscal year so that he can point to board donations in the fundraising letter. There was also an official reception of business/cultural power players to begin to develop funders and to meet Alex.

Alex sent out the package that FAI is using for conference and camp sales and sponsorships. New prospect lists are being created from the ground up. Alex and Aengus are soliciting ideas from the board for corporate sponsors and donors. If you know of people, please send their names to Alex.

Tom Phillion has suggested that we go to the National Endowment for the Arts Folk Life Division for an Engagement grant for our workshops and demonstrations and has offered to facilitate a meeting.

New Business

Aengus would like to have a Think Tank to explore Dan Navarro's suggestion for a Director's Award.

Michelle asked the Directors to please submit their reports in a timely manner to facilitate the preparation of the Board Book in time to distribute prior to the meeting for review.

Mary Sue commented that our Folk DJ population is getting smaller and several are now off the air. Perhaps we could begin to think of ways to recruit the next generation. This subject could be a great idea for a panel at the Conference.

Tim **MOVED** to adjourn, Lisa **seconded**. Sensing no objection, motion **CARRIED**. Meeting was adjourned at 3:09 PM ET.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Schwartz, Secretary