

OTTAWA SUZUKI SCHOOL

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
CAFETERIA, WOODROFFE HIGH SCHOOL, OTTAWA
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 2016, 7:00 PM**

PRESENT: (# of OSS-registered children, if more than 1, is in parenthesis following the name)

Parents present:

Bill Absi (2), Kurien Baby (by proxy) and Meenakshi Gupta (present), Maria Balakrishnan, Vicky Butz (2), Sylvia Chan (2), Deanne Donohue (2), Matt Falkner (4), Ammar Gharbi, Dan Harrel (2), Jinxing Huang, Angela Hui (2), Johanna Jochumsdottir, Randi Kårstad, Anna Katra (2), Paul Keen and Cynthia Sugars (3), Duncan McCallum, Shaun Mullally, Colette Murray, Irene Sandoval, Brooke Talisman, Jimena Vargas, Nicholas von Maltzahn, Marion Xhignesse

(Subtotal: 35)

Parents not present, voting by proxy:

Géraud Blanchet and Catriona Fagan, Annalisa Bonardi, Sonia Dimitrov, Jin Dodd, H. (Monica) Du, Branka Dzerdz (2), Teresa Ho, Lin Hu, Lynn and Shannon Johnston, Stephanie Lachman, Sunhwa Lee, Helen Mao, Malini Panchadcharam, Leticia Sanchez, David Tichbourne, Hai Yan Wang, Yuhang Wu

(Subtotal: 18)

Board Members present, not listed above:

Jerry Csaba (Advisory), John Royle, Francine Schutzman

Total: 56

1. Approval of the minutes of the Annual General Meeting of November 23, 2015.

Moved by Nicholas von Hobson, seconded by Anna Katra. Carried.

2. Report of President (John Royle, President)

Over the past year, our school focused on a few main themes: nurturing our children's individual excellence through Suzuki education and community performance, continuously improving the quality of our teaching, innovating creatively in our programming, and continuously improving our administration. In short, we focused on the quality of our school.

Nonetheless, last year's group-class enrollment declined for the third consecutive year, and we subsequently incurred a net loss of \$8,221, as compared to a net loss of \$8,894 in the previous year. This year, we have stabilized enrollment to approximately last year's level, and we have a balanced budget. Our current initiatives on enrollment outreach include our social media and web presence, our performances in the community, conventional advertising, and word-of-

mouth reference. In addition, we have analyzed our student year-over-year turnover, and are looking to this for insights as to how to improve enrollment.

Overall, last year was quite successful, and there were many highlights. These included: our Monday night playdowns, student recitals, the Kiwanis festival, James Ehnes' birthday celebration, community performances, a fiddle workshop for our FineTuners, our growing guitar program, our Wizard of Oz voice project, as well as Stellae Boreales Tours to China (July 2015) and Stratford, Ontario (spring, 2016). Many of these highlights depend so much on our parent volunteers, and we offer our thanks to all of those parents who have helped in this.

Our teachers are the heart of our school. This year, we welcome Megan Graham as a talented new faculty member, and we said a thankful farewell to Iain McPherson and Erin McDonald, who decided to leave the school. So far this year we do not have viola or cello group-classes, due to lack of enrollment in these instruments, but it is still our intention to grow strong programs in these instruments, in the longer term.

Our administration team continues to be led by Judy Ginsburg, who is also the school accompanist. Maria Balakrishnan has stepped down as Monday-night school coordinator, but Deanne Donohue, our long-time volunteer coordinator, is taking over Maria's responsibilities. We thank our administration team for their work, as the backbone of our school.

We are especially thankful to all those who are helping in our enrollment outreach. This includes, among others, Anna Katra and Adam Cicchilitti who have maintained our vibrant social media presence.

We have a balanced budget this year, and we believe we have an excellent faculty team. Please give us feedback on how we're doing and whether or not your child is benefitting from enrollment in OSS. If you are happy, tell us. And tell your neighbours and friends. And please write or email the administrator or the Board if you have specific overall school issues or concerns.

[A soft-copy of the President's report has been posted on the OSS website.]

3. Presentation of the Financial Review (John Royle, acting Treasurer)

The Financial Review for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2016 was done by Ouseley Hanvey Clipsham Deep LLP ("OHCD").

As reported above, the net loss for the year was \$8,221. The unrestricted net assets are \$49,114. Excluding the Tour and the Summer Camp, which are break-even programmes, our annual revenue is around \$250,000. So our unrestricted net assets are approximately 20% of our year's revenue net of these break-even programs. Accountants working with our type of organization often recommend working towards having a year of revenue in unrestricted net assets, to maintain financial stability in the longer term.

During the meeting, there was discussion regarding soliciting of charitable donations to the school. Sylvia Chan asked about soliciting donations at community concerts. John replied that this would be on the agenda for discussion with the new Board at their next meeting, with follow up as soon as possible afterwards.

[A soft-copy of the OHCD Financial Review has been posted on the OSS website.]

4. Approval of the Financial Review

MOTION: That Ottawa Suzuki Strings approve the Financial Review done by Ouseley Harvey Clipsham Deep LLP, for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2016.

Moved by Duncan McCallum and seconded by Marian Xhignesse. Carried.

5. Appointment of Ouseley Harvey Clipsham Deep LLP to conduct a Financial Review for the current fiscal year ending June 30, 2017.

It was noted that Ouseley Harvey Clipsham Deep LLP is at arm's length to the school.

MOTION: That Ouseley Harvey Clipsham Deep LLP be appointed to conduct a Financial Review for the current fiscal year, ending June 30, 2017.

Moved by Marian Xhignesse and seconded by Bill Absi. Carried.

6. Election of Directors:

Renate Harrison has stepped down after 3 years on our Board of Directors. We are thankful to Renate for her work on behalf of Ottawa Suzuki Strings, including her legal expertise in helping us with our recently revised bylaws. Randi Karstad is a new candidate for Director. She is a parent of a Book 4 student, and she also brings expertise to the Board in government advocacy and international affairs. These are the only changes in the slate of Directors, relative to last year. Note that one Director position remains vacant, subject to Board appointment. The Board is still looking for Director who would be appropriate as Treasurer, or who has some other required qualification or experience.

MOTION:

1. That the following be elected as Directors of Ottawa Suzuki Strings for the coming year:

Ammar Gharbi
Meenakshi Gupta
Johanna Jochumsdotir
Randi Karstad
Anna Katra
Duncan McCallum
John Royle
Francine Schutzman

2. In addition to the above eight members, that there be one open Board Director position, to be filled by Board appointment, if and when the Board finds an appropriate candidate.

3. In addition, that the following be approved as Advisory (non-voting) Board members:

Jerry Csaba
Elaine Klimasko (Artistic Director)

Moved by Marian Xhignesse, seconded by Deanne Donohue. Carried.

7. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn, at 7:50pm. Moved by Irene Sandoval, seconded by Duncan McCallum, and carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Francine Schutzman
Acting Secretary