

**OTTAWA SUZUKI STRINGS  
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
Monday, November 19, 2018, 7:00 PM  
Woodroffe High School**

**Minutes**

Attendance:

*Numbers in parentheses indicate how many votes each parent gets if he or she has more than one child enrolled in the school.*

Parents present: Bill Absi (2), Sylvia Chan (2), Grace Cheng, Mei-Lin Chow, Deanne Donohue (2), Dan Harrel (2), Elaine Howlett, Randi Karstad, Amir Mostafavi (2), Colette Murray, Alan Ng, Paul Keen (2), Tasmin Pan (2), Rachel Picard, Elham Shamsian, Sanjeev Sivarulrasa (2), Joe Sun, Nick von Maltzahn, Liguang Wang, Marion Xhignesse  
Sub-total: 28

Parent proxies: Bruce Ashfield, David Bales, Sarah Kalhok Bourque (2), Jesse Buzzie, Nicole Charron, Sue Chen (2), Sonia Dimitrov, H. (Monica) Du, Branka Dzerdz (2), Catriona Fagan, Karen Fung-Harris (2), Jamie Liew, Scott Macklin, Todd Miller (2), Maha Otari, Malini Panchadcharam, Sylvie Paquette, Katya Permiakova, Hongwei Ren, Margaret So (2), Letitia Sandrez, Naomi Spitale (2), Joanne Stynes (2), Nassrin Terstena, David Tichbourne, Jun Yang, Melly Yang, Ammie Zheng, Wei Zhong, Li Zhu  
Sub-total: 38

Non-parent Board Members: Meenakshi Gupta, John Royle, Francine Schutzman  
Sub-total: 3

Total number of votes: 69

President John Royle welcomed everyone to the meeting at 7:08 PM.

**1. Approval of the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of November 13, 2017.** Moved by Marion Xhignesse, seconded by Alan Ng. Carried.

**2. Report of the President, John Royle:**

A. John reviewed the school's mission.

B. The financial review for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2018, showed a net loss of \$9,195 on income of \$258,740. The shortfall was primarily due to overspending on community concerts and administration, in addition to smaller increases in some fixed costs. Lower enrollment could be, in part, a result of demographics. Last year we had 114 group class students, compared to just under 100 this year. John displayed a chart with year-by-year enrollment for the last five years. We lost 27 students from last year and gained 13.

C. We are always doing outreach. Community concerts help build bridges with the general public. This year, we will host a series of master classes financed by the Ottawa municipal government and open to the public. Two of our own teachers will be giving classes, plus some well-known musicians in the community. We have a continuing presence on social media.

D. Highlights from last year include:

- i. Monday night playdowns, recitals, Kiwanis
- ii. Community concerts: 5 Kinder NACO, outreach at the Beaverbrook and Hazeldean public libraries, the Guitar Society, the Tulip Festival, Music and Beyond, seniors' residences, and others
- iii. Events funded by a grant from the Ottawa Community Foundation: a string workshop with Fine Tuners at Vincent Massey Public School, a voice workshop at York Street Public School, and a workshop at the Boys' and Girls' Club.

E. Faculty changes:

- i. Jean-Hee Lee is a new group class teacher.
- ii. New theory teachers are Roger Feria, Lindsay Herle and Felicia Persaud.
- iii. Anya Hejnar, Peter Rapson, Alyssa Stevenson and Nick Deek have left the school.
- iv. Megan Graham is on maternity leave.

F. In faculty development this year, Lisa Moody is coaching our group-class teachers.

G. Special thanks to:

- i. Judy Ginsburg, Administrator
- ii. Deanne Dononue, School and Volunteer Coordinator
- iii. All the parent volunteers, without whom the school cannot function.

H. Judy Ginsburg did most of the work maintaining our Facebook page. Volunteers could help reduce administrative costs here, for example with photos and videos.

I. Meenakshi Gupta worked with Judy on grant applications. Judy did much of the project management and reporting.

J. The summer student was once again funded by a federal grant.

K. Our focus is on the group-class program, which is key to financial planning for the school.

L. John asked the parents to give feedback on how the school is doing, to spread the word if they're happy, and to contact the Administrator or the Board with concerns.

M. Last year's board consisted of:

John Royle (President, acting Treasurer)

Meenakshi Gupta (Vice President)

Francine Schutzman (Secretary)

Ammar Gharbi

Bill Absi

Paul Keen

Anna Katra (resigned)

Marina Kun (resigned)

Plus two vacant board positions, which remained unfilled throughout the year.

Advisory board member (non-voting): Elaine Klimasko (Artistic Director)

Ammar Garbi has announced his intention to step down as Board member this winter. The Board has decided that 7 directors for this coming year, for the entire year, would be best.

**3. John Royle presented the Financial Review** conducted by Ouseley Hanvey Clipsham Deep LLP for the last fiscal year, ending June 30, 2018. We had \$44,425 of unrestricted assets at the end of the year, compared to \$53,620 the previous year. In response to questions from the floor about administrative expenses and whether or not we should have a salary for the administrator rather than an hourly rate, John pointed out that salary is not a magic bullet, as the work still needs to get done. We need to unload some responsibilities from our administrator. There was a suggestion from the floor that we could defray some of our fixed-costs for community performances by requesting honoraria from some of those organizations where we perform.

Acceptance of the financial review was moved by Paul Keen and seconded by Bill Absi.  
Approved.

**4. Motion: that Ouseley Harvey Clipsham Deep LLP be appointed to conduct a financial review for the current fiscal year, ending June 30, 2019.**

Moved by Marian Xhignesse, seconded by Paul Keen. Approved.

**5. Election of Directors:**

The following were elected as Directors of Ottawa Suzuki Strings for the coming year:

Bill Absi  
Ammar Garbi  
Meenakshi Gupta  
Elaine Howlett  
Randi Karstad  
Paul Keen  
John Royle  
Francine Schutzman

Elaine Klimasko, our Artistic Director, is also elected as Advisory (non-voting) Board member.

**6. Open discussion:** There was an active discussion about reasons for students leaving the school, and the related need for parents to feel part of the OSS community. For example, the idea of having an organized parent event on Monday night, where more experienced Suzuki parents could share their wisdom and experiences with new parents at the school. Making a room available for parents to meet and discuss on Monday evenings would also help with parent community-building. Follow-up is required.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:33 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Francine Schutzman, Secretary