

**OTTAWA SUZUKI STRINGS  
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
Monday, November 18, 2019, 7:00 PM  
Woodroffe High School**

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: Sylvia Chan (2), Marion Xhignesse, Hongyan Chen, Riad Mahmoud, Wei Zhong, Dan Jiang, Dan Harrel, Matt Faulkner, Bill Absi (2), Meenakshi Gupta, Deanne Donohue (2), Farifteh Haeri, Paul Keen (2),  
(*subtotal of parents present: 17*)

Parent proxies: Sumi Aota (2), Leticia Sanchez, Maria Litva, Clara Lee (2), Shelley Helmer (2), Jamie Liew (2), Daisy Zhou, Jesse Buzzie, Margaret So (2), Jiaxuan Qi, Huijan Zhang, Jeremy Arndt, Riad Mahmoud, Alma Rahmani (2), Malini Panchadcharam, Fernando Aguilar, Anja Zobrist (2), Diane Pinet, Tomoko Swenson Nakumura, Joe Sun, Ulyana Osorio, Bryan Larson, Dianna Graham (2), Tasmin Xiuzhen Pan (2), Jim Yang (2), Nassrin Terstena, Jia Wan, David Bales, Jimena Vargas, H (Monica) Du, Karen Fung-Harris (2), Jaime Yeung Miller (2), Andrew Wallace (2), David Tichourne, Ryan Foster, Tongsheng Zheng, Katherine Russell (2)  
(*subtotal of parent proxies: 51*)

Teachers present: Frank Williams

Non-parent Board Members: John Royle, Christy Harris  
(*subtotal of non-parent friends of the school: 2*)

Total number of votes, including those present plus proxies: 71

President John Royle welcomed everyone to the meeting at 7:03 PM.

**1. Approval of the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of November 19, 2018.** Moved by Marion Xhignesse, seconded by Paul Keen. Approved.

**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, 2019, showed that we had a total income of \$247,487 including tour and grants. We were \$2,984 short of balancing. Last year we had 99 group class students; there are 100 this year as of now. The smaller enrollment last year, compared to the previous year, led to the shortfall. For this year, some fixed costs have increased. John displayed a chart with year-by-year enrollment for the last five years. We lost 31 students last year, with attrition distributed more or less evenly across the various group classes. The Board and teachers are working to understand and address this. Teacher continuity is key to student continuity.

C. We had success with outreach: 32 new students. Community concerts help with our public profile. We have a continuing presence on social media.

D. Highlights from the last year include:

- i. Monday night playdowns, recitals, Kiwanis
- ii. Community concerts: 3 Kinder NACO plus a “String Petting Zoo” at NAC Tunetown, outreach at the Beaverbrook Public library, Ottawa Children’s festival, the Tulip Festival, seniors' residences, and others. Frank Williams suggested some possibilities with other seniors' homes.
- iii. Events funded by a grant from the Ottawa Community Foundation, including the Lowertown Community Resource Centre Summer Camp music program
- iv. Masterclass series, funded by a City of Ottawa grant
- v. Faculty fundraising concert
- vi. Stellae Boreales Tour to New York

E. Faculty changes:

Our new faculty members this year are: Essie Liu (violin), Désirée Abbey (cello) and Frank Williams (theory). Also, Megan Graham has returned from maternity leave.

F. Faculty and Curriculum development

- i. Lisa Moody mentored our our Violin Books 1-4 group-class teachers.
- ii. Nathan Bredeson rolled out a new course on fretboard theory for guitar students

G. Thanks to:

- i. Judy Ginsburg, Administrator
- ii. Deanne Dononue, School and Volunteer Coordinator
- iii. All our volunteers!

H. Ongoing Initiatives

- i. Judy Ginsburg did most of the work maintaining our Facebook page. We could use help with photos and videos. Volunteers could help reduce administrative costs.
- ii. Meenakshi Gupta worked with Judy on grant applications. Judy did much of the project management and reporting.
- iii. The summer student was once again funded by a federal grant.
- iv. After feedback from last year’s AGM, the Board created an ad hoc committee headed by Elaine Howlett and Randi Karstad to work on Parent Community-Building.
- v. Thank you for filling in the parent survey! The feedback has been helpful.
- vi. Please tell your neighbours: word of mouth remains our best recruiting strategy.

I. John reviewed last year’s Board membership. Christy Harris filled an empty Board position last spring, and Randi Karstad resigned, once again taking a position in Norway.

We are always on the lookout for new potential Board members. Prerequisites are:

- i. Being available for monthly meetings, October to May
- ii. Honesty, diligence, and an openness to understand
- iii. Enthusiasm for Ottawa Suzuki Strings

**3. Bill Absi presented the Financial Review** conducted by Ouseley Harvey Clipsham Deep LLP for the last fiscal year, ending June 30, 2019. We had \$41,441 in the bank at the end of the year, compared to \$44,425 the previous year. Administrative costs were lower than the previous year. In terms of turnover, we are replacing the students that are leaving, though we

would like to increase overall enrollment. Fees were raised slightly to compensate for losses. We are looking at ways of reducing administrative overhead. Last year's faculty fundraising concert raised \$715.

Acceptance of the financial review was moved by Marion Xhignesse, seconded by Paul Keen. Approved.

**4. Motion: that Ouseley Hanvey Clipsham Deep LLP be appointed to conduct a financial review for the current fiscal year, ending June 30, 2020.**

Moved by Marion 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

Meenakshi Gupta

Elaine Howlett

Christy Harris

Paul Keen

John Royle

Francine Schutzman

Non-voting member: Elaine Klimasko (Artistic Director)

There are two unfilled slots

Moved by Meenakshi Gupta, seconded by Marion Xhignesse. Approved.

**6. Open discussion:** John showed the results of the parent survey. There was a discussion about attrition, especially in the Books 1-4 groups. Parents asked if we had any comparative information with relation to other Suzuki programs. One parent commended John and the people leading the school (Judy and Deanne) for their effort.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:34 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Keen, Acting Secretary