

Minutes 2016 ROPA Conference Madison, WI

Tues, July 26 – Thurs, July 28, 2016

Full Members

Akron Symphony Orchestra
Albany Symphony
Allentown Symphony
Ann Arbor Symphony
Arizona Opera Orchestra
Atlanta Ballet Orchestra
Atlanta Opera Orchestra
Austin Symphony Orchestra
Boston Ballet Orchestra
Boulder Philharmonic
California Philharmonic
California Symphony
Canton Symphony Orchestra
Chattanooga Symphony & Opera Orchestra
Colorado Springs Philharmonic Orchestra
Dallas Opera Orchestra
Dayton Philharmonic
Duluth Superior Symphony Orchestra
East Texas Symphony Orchestra
El Paso Symphony
Erie Philharmonic Orchestra
Fort Wayne Philharmonic
Fresno Philharmonic Orchestra
Harrisburg Symphony Orchestra
Hartford Symphony Orchestra
Houston Ballet Orchestra
Houston Grand Opera Orchestra
Huntsville Symphony Orchestra
Illinois Philharmonic Orchestra
Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra
Knoxville Symphony Orchestra
Las Vegas Philharmonic
Lexington Philharmonic
Long Beach Symphony Orchestra
Madison Symphony Orchestra
Memphis Symphony Orchestra
Michigan Opera Theatre Orchestra
Minnesota Opera Orchestra
Mississippi Symphony Orchestra
Monterey Symphony
New Haven Symphony Orchestra
New Mexico Philharmonic
New West Symphony
Oakland Symphony

Omaha Symphony Orchestra
Pacific Symphony
Palm Beach Opera Orchestra
Pasadena Symphony
Reading Symphony Orchestra
Santa Barbara Symphony
Santa Rosa Symphony
Sarasota Orchestra
South Bend Symphony
Southwest Florida Symphony Orchestra
Southwest Michigan Symphony Orchestra
Spokane Symphony Orchestra
Symphony Silicon Valley
Tacoma Symphony Orchestra
Toledo Symphony Orchestra
Tucson Symphony Orchestra
West Virginia Symphony
Wichita Symphony Orchestra
Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra

Associate Members

Annapolis Symphony
Binghamton Philharmonic
Eastern Connecticut Symphony
Flint Symphony Orchestra
Green Bay Symphony Orchestra
Lincoln Symphony Orchestra
Milwaukee Ballet Orchestra

Member Orchestras Not Represented

Delaware Symphony Orchestra
Elgin Symphony Orchestra
Eugene Symphony
Glimmerglass Festival Orchestra
Hudson Valley Philharmonic
Lansing Symphony
Los Angeles Opera Orchestra
Orchestra Iowa
Pittsburgh Ballet Orchestra
Pittsburgh Opera Orchestra
Portland Opera Orchestra
Portland Symphony Orchestra
Rhode Island Philharmonic
Richmond Symphony
Shreveport Symphony Orchestra
Tri-Cities Opera
Tulsa Opera Orchestra

Tuesday, July 26, 2016

Proceedings

ROPA President Carla Lehmeier-Tatum warmly welcomed the Delegates and attendees and called the Conference to order at 9:00 a.m., Tuesday, July 26, 2016. The opening proceedings were held at the Pyle Center in Madison, Wisconsin. President Lehmeier-Tatum introduced the ROPA Executive Board: Vice-President Nancy Nelson, Secretary Karen Sandene, Treasurer Donna Loomis, Members-at-Large, Maya Stone, Naomi Bendsdorf-Frisch, Taylor Brown, Mary Anne Lemoine, Mike Smith and Steve Wade, and Delegate-at-Large to the AFM Convention Maurice Grants.

Quorum

Secretary Sandene performed the Roll Call, and determined that there was a quorum, with 72 orchestras represented; 63 Full Members and 7 Associate Members.

Welcoming Addresses

Brian Whitty, President of AFM Local 166, welcomed the delegates to the Madison area and gave helpful hints about getting around town.

Norman Gilliland, Wisconsin Public Radio. Gilliland talked about the various performing arts organizations, and how culture can bring people with diverse political viewpoints together.

Mark Cantrell, Executive Director, Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra. Cantrell spoke of the importance of board education, particularly in sending the message that musicians are not the labor force, but rather are the product.

Lessons Learned: Hartford Symphony/Grand Rapids Symphony

Nathan Kahn, Randy Whatley, Paul Austin and Steve Wade discussed the outcomes of the Hartford and Grand Rapids negotiations as a result of social media, networking and public relations activities.

Building Community Support – Armando Iberra, University of Wisconsin School for Workers

Armando Iberra spoke of the importance of building connections in the community. He also gave examples of power created with relationship-building, in particular, "A Day Without Latinos".

Solidarity Sing-Along

Attendees walked to the Wisconsin State Capitol and participated in the daily Solidarity Sing-Along.

MAL Breakout Sessions

The ROPA Delegates met with their Member-at-Large and SSD representatives in closed sessions to discuss their orchestras' situations and their members' concerns.

Paul Austin – Conductor Survey Discussion

Paul Austin and the importance of conductor evaluations and the proper procedure for administering them and using the results.

Topic Breakout Sessions

ROPA delegates spent the rest of the session attending one of three breakout sessions topics ranging from Grievances with Rochelle Skolnick, Public Relations with Randy Whatley, and Committee Basics with Chris Durham and Nathan Kahn.

New Delegate Orientation

The new Delegates attended an orientation hosted by President Lehmeier-Tatum and Vice President Nelson.

Wednesday, July 27, 2016

Ray Hair – President, American Federation of Musicians

Ray Hair, President of the AFM, addressed the conference, giving highlights of the AFM Convention, the Democratic National Convention, and Local Officer Training.

Allison Beck – Director of Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service

Allison Beck spoke in detail on the “gig economy” and the effect it has on the labor industry and contract negotiations. She spoke of the services that the FMCS can offer negotiating orchestras.

Officer Reports

Treasurer Donna Loomis delivered the Treasurer’s report.

Secretary Karen Sandene delivered the Secretary’s report.

Vice President Nancy Nelson gave a tribute to President Lehmeier-Tatum’s service to ROPA. Nelson presented an engraved stepping stone in appreciation to Carla’s work.

President Lehmeier-Tatum delivered the President’s Address.

Randy Cohen – Americans for the Arts

Randy Cohen presented the results of several surveys on the impact of arts and arts education on individuals and communities.

Don Taylor – University of Wisconsin School for Workers

Union Perception at the Work Place/ Connecting with Younger Members

Conference Reports

Representing their players’ conferences were Liz Johnston (OCSM), Tom Mendel (TMA), and Bruce Ridge (ICSOM). Conference dates for their respective conferences were announced.

Michael Childers, David Nack – University of Wisconsin School for Workers

How to Jumpstart Your Union

Nominations

President Carla Lehmeier-Tatum rose to the podium to lead nominations for President. Katie Shields, Arizona Opera Orchestra, nominated Mike Smith, Minnesota Opera Orchestra. The Conference then elected Smith by acclamation.

Nominations for Treasurer were taken. Karen Barker, Erie Philharmonic, nominated Donna Loomis, El Paso Symphony. The Conference then elected Loomis by acclamation.

Nominations for Delegate-At-Large to the AFM Convention were taken. Maurice Grants, Pasadena Symphony, nominated Naomi Bensdorf Frisch, Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra. The Conference then elected Bensdorf Frisch by acclamation.

The following people were nominated for four open ROPA Member-at-Large positions (2 2-year positions and 2 1-year positions – listed alphabetically):

- Karen Barker, Erie Philharmonic, nominated by Melanie Rapier, West Virginia Symphony
- Taylor Brown, Chattanooga Symphony and Opera Orchestra, nominated by Donna Loomis, El Paso Symphony
- Lisa Davis, Mississippi Symphony, nominated by Maya Stone
- Sean Diller, Southwest Michigan Symphony, nominated by Beverly Setzer, Tacoma Symphony.
- Maurice Grants, Pasadena Symphony, nominated by Barbara Zmich, Michigan Opera Theatre Orchestra.
- Dave Shelton, Lexington Philharmonic, nominated by Donna Loomis, El Paso Symphony.
- Cory Tiffin, Las Vegas Philharmonic, nominated by Dave Sheldon, Lexington Philharmonic.
- Steve Wade, Hartford Symphony, nominated by Chris Hake, Omaha Symphony.

Audit Report

The Audit Committee consisted of Steve Benne (Knoxville Symphony), Norman Ludwin (California Philharmonic), and Debbie Spangler (Oakland Symphony and Symphony Silicon Valley). They determined that the books were in order.

Thursday, July 28, 2016

Jay Blumenthal - Symphonic Services Division

Jay Blumenthal, Director of the AFM Symphonic Services Division, introduced the SSD staff, and highlighted some key symphonic successes during his tenure as SSD Director.

Symphonic Services Division Presentations

SSD staff members in turn addressed the delegates on the following topics: Laurence Hofmann gave an introduction to features of the new electronic wage chart; Nathan Kahn spoke of the early days of his orchestral experiences and how it led to the creation of ROPA. The Resolution honoring Nathan Kahn which was adopted by the ROPA Conference on July 27 was read aloud by Secretary Sandene.

Rochelle Skolnick – Role-playing

Rochelle Skolnick led the delegates in a mock Peer Review procedure, *Lillian's Last Stand: an Interactive Workshop on Due Process and Peer Review*.

Rabbi Renee Bauer – Executive Director, Interfaith Coalition for Worker Justice

Rabbi Renee Bauer spoke of how to build alliances between community organizations and labor, going into detail about how alliances with religious institutions might work. Bauer noted the importance of remembering that labor groups are partisan and how non-profits are often non-partisan.

Elections

The Election Committee consisted of Katie Shields, Arizona Opera Orchestra (Chair); Melody Rapier, West Virginia Symphony; and Diedre Buckley, Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra. Rapier delivered the election results; there were no problems.

Member-at-Large Results:

* Dave Shelton, Lexington Philharmonic	53
* Steve Wade, Hartford Symphony	50
*Taylor Brown, Chattanooga Symph and Opera	40
**Sean Diller, Southwest Michigan Symphony	39
**Lisa Davis, Mississippi Symphony	34
Karen Barker, Erie Philharmonic	25

Cory Tiffin, Las Vegas Philharmonic	25
Maruice Grants, Pasadena Symphony	24
* Elected to a 2-year term	
** Elected to a 1-year term	

Site Selection for 2018 ROPA Conference

Pending approval from the home Local, Portland OR was selected as the site for the 2018 ROPA Conference.

Debbie Newmark – IMA

Debbie Newmark, SSD Director of Symphonic Electronic Media, spoke on the Integrated Media Agreement.

Laurence Hofmann – Wage Chart

Laurence Hofmann continued discussion on how to work with the interactive features of the on-line wage chart site.

Resolutions

The following Resolutions were approved by the ROPA Conference on July 27, 2016:

Resolution No. 1

Subject: Resolution congratulating Americans for the Arts for their support of a full creative life for all, and championing policies and practices of cultural equity that empower a just, inclusive, and equitable nation.

Americans for the Arts Resolution

Whereas, Since 1960, Americans for the Arts has served, advanced, and led the network of organizations and individuals who cultivate, promote, sustain, and support the arts in America; and

Whereas, The research and data developed by Americans for the Arts provide tremendous social, economic, and educational benefits to arts and cultural organizations within our communities; and

Whereas, Americans for the Arts has realized great success in its lobbying efforts on behalf of arts funding, educational funding, tax policy, and charitable giving policies; and

Whereas, The mission of Americans for the Arts is to ensure that every American has access to the transformative power of the arts; now, therefore, be it Resolved, That the Regional Orchestra Players' Association (ROPA) does hereby recognize and commend Americans for the Arts for its focus in providing action-oriented research that assists arts organizations in advocating better local, regional, and national level arts policies; and

Resolved, That ROPA wishes to thank Americans for the Arts' Vice President of Arts and Policy, Randy Cohen, for allocating time and expertise with his presentations at ROPA Conferences; and

Resolved, That ROPA thanks Americans for the Arts for its unwavering devotion to and support for the arts in our nation, and, further, be it

Resolved, That ROPA recommends that ROPA musicians do support and promote the efforts of the Americans for the Arts.

Submitted by: The ROPA Executive Board

Resolution No. 2

Subject: *In solidarity with our brothers and sisters in Kalamazoo in their fight for good-faith bargaining and fair labor practices.*

Support of the Musicians of the Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra

Whereas, The Regional Orchestra Players' Association asserts that fairness and good faith are the cornerstones of effective collective bargaining; and

Whereas, The Musicians of the Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra bargained fairly and openly with their management for 19 months; and

Whereas, When the Musicians of the Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra thought they had reached a conditional tentative agreement with their Employer, the Employer unilaterally changed terms and conditions of employment by issuing drastically changed rehearsal schedules while the final details of the agreement were being worked out prior to ratification; and

Whereas, These changes in rehearsal schedules would impact the majority of the musicians of the orchestra by making it difficult for them to meet their obligations under the collective bargaining agreement to continue to perform with the orchestra; and

Whereas, The American Federation of Musicians Local 228, as bargaining representative of the Musicians, filed an Unfair Labor Practice (ULP) charge against the Employer; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the membership of ROPA deplors the actions of the Employer which undermine the Musicians' ability to work and earn a living; and

Resolved, That the membership of ROPA supports AFM Local 228 in its insistence on the Employer's fair treatment of its Musicians by its filing of an ULP charge; and

Resolved, That ROPA and its 87 orchestras with over 7,000 members stands in solidarity with the Musicians of the Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra; and, therefore, further, be it

Resolved, That ROPA encourages the Employer to rescind the change in the rehearsal schedule and refrain from unilaterally imposing such changes and

future unlawful conduct. **Submitted by:** The ROPA Executive Board

Resolution No. 3

Subject: *An encouragement to ROPA orchestras to incorporate the Code of Ethical Audition Practices into their Audition Process and their Collective Bargaining Agreements*

Code of Ethical Audition Practices Resolution

Whereas, The Regional Orchestra Players' Association (ROPA), understands that orchestras incur a significant expense when running auditions; and

Whereas, Those orchestras may need to limit the number of candidates for a vacancy through resume

screening; and

Whereas, ROPA believes that the Code of Ethical Audition Practices provides excellent guidance for running auditions efficiently and fairly, including during the resume screening process; and

Whereas, ROPA recognizes that not all orchestras are aware of or follow the Code of Ethical Audition Practices; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That ROPA encourages its member orchestras to follow the guidelines in the Code of Ethical Audition Practices; and, further, be it

Resolved, That ROPA encourages its member orchestras to consider incorporating the Code of Ethical Audition Practices into its Collective Bargaining agreements.

Submitted by: Naomi Bendorf Frisch, Member-at-Large, ROPA Executive Board and Cory Tiffin, Delegate, Las Vegas Philharmonic

Resolution No. 4

Subject: *Resolution celebrating the contributions and devotion of Leadership of Bruce Ridge to the symphonic player conferences*

Resolution Honoring Bruce Ridge

Whereas, Bruce Ridge has been involved in the International Conference of Symphony and Opera Musicians (ICSOM) for 23 years; and

Whereas, Bruce Ridge has been involved with the work of the Governing Board of ICSOM for 14 years; and

Whereas, Bruce Ridge has been Chairperson of ICSOM for 5 terms, a period covering 10 years, longer than any of his predecessors; and

Whereas, Bruce Ridge is concluding his final term as ICSOM Chairperson in August of 2016; and

Whereas, Bruce Ridge has not only been a strong leader and Arts Advocate but he has been a true advocate for Symphonic Musicians throughout his career by working tirelessly to promote a positive message about symphony orchestras to the public; and

Whereas, Bruce Ridge's inspirational work will continue to positively impact the lives of symphonic musicians for decades to come; and

Whereas, Bruce Ridge has provided invaluable leadership to the musicians of ICSOM orchestras; and

Whereas, Bruce Ridge has initiated numerous campaigns that have provided monetary assistance to symphony orchestra musicians, exceeding one million dollars in contributions; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Regional Orchestra Players' Association hereby applauds and commends Bruce Ridge for his service to ICSOM and its members and for his tireless friendship and support of ROPA; and, further, be it

Resolved, That ROPA wishes to thank Bruce Ridge for his true support, devotion, and friendship to ROPA and our 7,000 members; as we wish him all the best in his future endeavors.

Submitted by: The ROPA Executive Board

Resolution No. 5

Subject: *In appreciation to Janice Galassi for her unrelenting work for ROPA and in support of her current health challenges.*

Appreciation and Support to Janice Galassi

Whereas, Janice Galassi has been unrelenting in her support for the Regional Orchestra Players' Association (ROPA), sharing her vast experience, knowledge, and wisdom with ROPA from her years of experience as an organizer, director, and negotiator for the American Federation of Musicians (AFM); and

Whereas, Janice Galassi has steadfastly stood for strong union principles of fairness, common sense, and compassion; and has shared those values with ROPA and all who know her; and

Whereas, Janice Galassi became a member of the ROPA Executive Board in 2013; and

Whereas, Janice Galassi who recently retired from the AFM to enjoy a well deserved retirement has experienced personal life changing experiences; and

Whereas, Janice Galassi also recently experienced challenging health issues; and, therefore, be it

Resolved, That ROPA sends our good wishes, thoughts and prayers to Janice Galassi for a future filled with health, joy and blissful retirement; and

Resolved, That the membership, delegates, and the Executive Board of ROPA hereby sincerely thank Janice Galassi for her years of professional assistance, advice, and service to ROPA, its delegates and membership; and

Resolved, That ROPA wishes to convey to Janice Galassi our hope that she will choose to continue to be part of ROPA for many years to come; and further, be it

Resolved, That the membership and leadership of ROPA does wish to fully express appreciation and support to Janice Galassi, a person we feel has been and continues to be of great importance to ROPA and the arts industry.

Submitted by: The ROPA Executive Board

Resolution No. 6

Subject: *Resolution applauding and celebrating the contributions of Nathan Kahn to ROPA and its orchestras upon his retirement*

Resolution Honoring Nathan Kahn

Whereas, Nathan Kahn is one of the founding members of The Regional Orchestra Players' Association (ROPA); and

Whereas, Nathan Kahn is the founding President of ROPA; and

Whereas, Nathan Kahn has been a musician member of a ROPA orchestra for the majority of his career;

and

Whereas, Nathan Kahn has provided invaluable assistance to the musicians of ROPA orchestras as a contract negotiator for 28 years, negotiating over 300 contracts; and

Whereas, Nathan Kahn is retiring from his position as an American Federation of Musicians (AFM) Symphonic Services Division (SSD) Negotiator as of August 31, 2016; and

Whereas, Nathan Kahn's contributions to the success of ROPA, its musicians, and its member orchestras have been crucial in ensuring the health and well-being of each; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That ROPA applauds, recognizes, and commends Nathan Kahn for his lifetime devotion of outstanding service and unwavering commitment; and

Resolved, That ROPA hereby thanks Nathan Kahn for his support and unfailing friendship to ROPA and its members, and to unionism itself; and

Resolved, That ROPA truly hopes that Nathan Kahn will continue to be a part of ROPA, in any capacity, for many years to come; and, further, be it

Resolved, That ROPA wishes Nathan Kahn all the best in his retirement. **Submitted by:** The ROPA Executive Board

Resolution No. 7

Subject: *Resolution in gratitude to Carla Lehmeier-Tatum for 9 years of faithful service as President of ROPA.*

Resolution in Gratitude to Carla Lehmeier-Tatum

Whereas, Carla Lehmeier-Tatum has been a musician member of a Regional Orchestra Players' Association (ROPA) orchestra for the majority of her career; and

Whereas, Carla Lehmeier-Tatum has been involved with the work of ROPA for some twelve years; and

Whereas, Carla Lehmeier-Tatum has provided passionate and invaluable assistance and leadership to the musicians of ROPA orchestras as President for nine years, making her the longest serving President of ROPA; and

Whereas, Carla Lehmeier-Tatum is completing her service as ROPA President on July 28, 2016; and

Whereas, under her leadership, ROPA has gained more than 20 member orchestras; and

Whereas, Carla Lehmeier-Tatum's determination and dedication have ensured that ROPA, its orchestras, and its musicians have a strong voice and are able to participate prominently in the national discourse of our Union; and

Whereas, Carla Lehmeier-Tatum has led and managed ROPA responsibly with an eye toward the future; and

Whereas, Carla Lehmeier-Tatum's leadership has been the catalyst for the growth of the strong reputation of Regional Orchestras in the United States; and

Whereas, Carla Lehmeier-Tatum's contributions to the success of ROPA, its musicians, and its member

orchestras have been crucial in ensuring the growth and well-being of each; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That ROPA thanks, applauds, and commends Carla Lehmeier- Tatum for her long service and strong leadership to ROPA and its members; and

Resolved, That ROPA thanks Carla Lehmeier-Tatum for her untiring commitment to all ROPA orchestras and musicians; and, further, be it

Resolved, That ROPA truly hopes that Carla Lehmeier-Tatum will continue to be a part of ROPA, in any capacity, for many years to come.

Submitted by: The ROPA Executive Board

Resolution No. 8

Subject: *Resolution Commending ICSOM, Regarding Article 5, Section 32 (Providing for Online Balloting) of the AFM Bylaws*

Praise for ICSOM and its Modern E-Voting Resolution

Whereas, Symphonic bargaining units often face difficulties in ratifying collective bargaining agreements through in-person voting; and

Whereas, Mail balloting is not a viable option in circumstances where a ratification vote must be held quickly, or where eligible members are away from home for extended periods; and

Whereas, The International President's Office is now maintaining a list of one or more vendors whose online balloting services meet the American Federation of Musicians (AFM) requirements; and

Whereas, the International Conference of Symphony and Opera Musicians (ICSOM) was instrumental in recognizing and creating those guidelines to be recognized by the AFM; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Regional Orchestra Players' Association (ROPA) praises ICSOM for its work on this important resolution; and, further, be it

Resolved, That ROPA recommends that its orchestras take advantage of this helpful and useful change to the AFM bylaws and use the guidelines to conduct online ratifications.

Submitted by: The ROPA Executive Board

Resolution No. 9

Subject: *Reaffirmation of ROPA's stance that all orchestras should classify musicians as employees, instead of misclassifying them as independent contractors, as asserted by the National Labor Relations Board and affirmed by the United States Court of Appeals in Lancaster Symphony Orchestra v. NLRB on April 19, 2016.*

Orchestral Musicians' Employee Status Recognition

Whereas, The National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) found that the Musicians of the Lancaster Symphony Orchestra are employees and not independent contractors; and

Whereas, The Musicians' status as employees entitles them to form a union and receive all the benefits

therefrom; and

Whereas, The United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit affirmed and upheld the NLRB's finding; and

Whereas, The Regional Orchestra Players' Association (ROPA) supports and agrees with the determination that orchestral musicians are employees and not independent contractors; and

Whereas, ROPA supports the unionization efforts by the Musicians of the Lancaster Symphony Orchestra and others like it; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That ROPA and its 87 orchestras with over 7,000 members applauds the Greater Lancaster Federation of Musicians, AFM Local 294 (Lancaster, PA) for its extraordinary efforts to help classify the Musicians of the Lancaster Symphony Orchestra as employees; and

Resolved, That ROPA applauds Local 294 for its organizing efforts; and, further, be it

Resolved, That ROPA congratulates the Musicians of the Lancaster Symphony Orchestra on the negotiations of their first union contract.

Submitted by: The ROPA Legislative Committee

Oath of Office

Nathan Kahn and Carla Lehmeier-Tatum administered the oath of office to the newly-elected ROPA Board.

Adjourned

ROPA President Carla Lehmeier-Tatum adjourned the 2016 ROPA Conference at 3:00 p.m. on Thursday, July 28, 2016.

Respectfully submitted,



Karen Sandene, ROPA Secretary