

**Pennsylvania Music Educators Association
District Presidents Meeting Minutes
January 8, 2010
PMEA Executive Office, Hamburg
7:00 p.m.**

Attendance: Fran Nesta, Bill Pendziwiatr, Scott Sheehan, Doug Bolasky, John Herlihy, Nino Bennici, Dan Atwood, Brian Stacey, Eric Dundore, Lee Rickard, Glenn Cameron, Steve Luxbacher, Bruce Blenny, Bill Ciabattari, Margaret Bauer (non-voting).

Fran Nesta welcomed the presidents and had each president introduce himself to the group.

District President Reports

District 7 – Eric Dundore raised a concern about the length of festivals. District 7 would like to limit time out of class to 1.5 days. There was discussion on the topic. The consensus was that we need to talk to our members at our festivals and ask the following questions: 1) what do you see as the purpose of the festivals? 2) what would you like to see as the purpose? 3) what is the ideal length of a festival? And 4) how do you feel about eliminating region level festivals or changing the structure in some way?

District 1 – Lee Rickard’s report stands as written. He expressed concerns about increasingly high festival registration fees.

District 2 – Glenn Cameron’s report stands as written. He expressed concerns about finding hosts for festivals in his district.

District 3 – Steve Luxbacher’s report stands as written. He asked the district presidents for copies of their job descriptions for C/I reps. He also raised a question about the rotation of festivals (band coming after orchestra two out of three years, which was changed by the board a few years ago).

District 12 – Bruce Glenny reported that District 12 held a successful professional development day, attended by 255 members. He also expressed the challenge of hotels vs. home for housing students during festivals; how to keep costs down but still use hotels for security.

District 8 – Bill Ciabattari expressed his concern about dwindling student participation in festivals in his district.

District 5 – Travis Weller, who attended the meeting via telephone due to illness, expressed concerns about finding candidates for vice-president in his district.

District 10 – Doug Bolasky’s report stands as written. He reported that all secondary festivals are hosted for next year and he shared a concern from a district superintendent about the conflict of the PMEA conference with PSSA testing.

District 11 – John Herlihy’s report stands as written. He reported that his Region Chorus host had to change the dates of the festival to March 10-12 (backing up one day) due to local school district conflicts. He expressed concerns about rising festival expenses and the decreasing number of students auditioning for festivals.

District 9 – Nino Bennici’s report stands as written.

District 6 – Dan Atwood’s report stands as written. He added that there is now a host for the 6th grade song fest on May 7; it will be held in Windber.

District 4 – Brian Stacey’s report stands as written.

All-Eastern Honors Ensembles Ranking Process – Fran explained to the presidents how the process was developed (the board will vote on the process tomorrow).

All-State Harp Rubric – Fran explained the need for the rubric and the successful use of it on a trial basis this year (the board will vote on the rubric tomorrow).

Region Guest Conductors – Nathaniel Parker of Marywood was proposed as a possible region conductor. He was not approved yet as no one could speak to his conducting expertise with high school students. It was suggested that he guest conduct some district festivals in Pennsylvania prior to being considered for region level festivals. It was moved and seconded to approve James Gallagher for Region Band. Motion carried.

Information Items

Fran reported that he will be asking the presidents and C/I reps for volunteers tomorrow for three task forces: Partnership Task Force (to develop guidelines), Website Advisory Committee, and State Festival Manual Revision Committee.

Bill Pendziwiatr presented a proposal to develop a promotional DVD of performing groups to be used as an advocacy tool. After discussion, Fran proposed to appoint a committee to investigate and develop the proposal further for future consideration.

Fran reminded the district presidents of their ushering responsibilities at the All-State concerts.

Williamsport Orchestra Director’s Request for Re-Districting – Fran asked Bill Pendziwiatr to call Jeff Tedford and share our discussion with him. There was much discussion about the issue of Williamsport always providing the string section (most of it) for District 8 orchestra. No resolution was developed.

Membership Rebates – Fran presented the issue of the membership rebates received by the districts from the state organization. The state is doing more and more accounting work for the districts; and the state must consider raising dues to cover deficits at a time when the district financial accounts are healthier than the state’s. The possibility of suspending the payments for a specified period of time or rescinding them were presented as possible ways to avoid a dues increase. The presidents will take the issue back to their individual executive boards for discussion; Margaret will discuss with the district secretaries in April.

MENC Elections – Fran reported on the candidates running for vice-president/president-elect of MENC and urged the presidents to listen to the candidate speeches on MENC’s website and then to vote.

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.