

## **ICSOM Governing Board Mid-winter Meeting – Renaissance Hotel – Chicago, IL**

Monday, February 16, 2009

*Bruce Ridge, Brian Rood, Laura Ross, Michael Moore, Richard Levine, Matt Comerford, Paul Gunther, Cathy Payne, Meredith Snow, Len Leibowitz*

### **Opening remarks:**

Bruce began with general comments about the orchestra field and that our members look to us for guidance. He pointed to the fact that all our orchestras are not facing the same problems, they are each dealing with different issues – endowments, bank fees, mismanagement, etc. Len commended Bruce for his work and his leadership.

Michael distributed and explained the most recent financial reports, which included interest accrual losses but not principal. 2009 is the final year of the dues increase but Michael believes there is no need to consider raising it in 2010. Some orchestras have downsized in the past few years which have led to some decreases in individual orchestra payments. Richard suggested it might be time for a conference dues structure explanation. Michael also pointed out that Len's contract is up for renegotiation at the end of this season.

### **ICSOM Electronic Media Committee:**

Bruce had hoped to have an in-depth discussion about this topic at the midwinter meeting last year but travel problems being what they were, it didn't occur. There have been concerns about the role of the committee and the Media Chair in regard to individual orchestra negotiations, and there was prolonged discussion about how to improve communication between the various constituents (ICSOM chair and governing board, the Media chair and the Media Committee.)

Once the ongoing negotiations for the Audio-Visual/Convergence Agreement are completed, it is possible that the committee could be disbanded and some sort of media advisory committee would replace it. During the discussion, ICSOM's past role in various AFM negotiations as well as the reasons for the size and complement of the current committee were reviewed.

MSC [Richard/Matt] that the governing board review and revise the existing media committee guidelines.

This needs to be done soon via e-mail.

### **ICSOM and Facebook:**

The board agreed Bruce should set up an ICSOM page on Facebook as a tool to reach out to people; however it will not be an official site of ICSOM. Members of the group have the ability to post comments on the group "wall." The board will not be responsible for wall posts from Facebook group members.

### **Education Committee:**

Julie Ayers, Larry Wolfe and Jaime Austria have all expressed interest in serving on this committee; the musicians who attended the conference session last summer will also be contacted regarding their interest. Paul Gunther will also serve on the committee. Guidelines need to be developed (this will begin via e-mail) and some projects can include researching orchestra programs, investigating grant and loan information, and learning more about *El Systema*.

### **The AFM/RMA situation, the future of the AFM and the AFM-EPF:**

The governing board is quite concerned that many symphonic issues are being ignored and SSD services have been made worse since the last convention due to the ever shrinking staff and over-

booking of the two negotiators who have been begging for additional negotiators for years. Delay in hiring a new SSD director has also been an issue. Many in the AFM are beginning to think that the IEB is more interested in funding their legal battles with recording musicians and the RMA than dealing with issues like advising orchestras in financial trouble. This also causes concern regarding protecting the AFM Strike Fund, ROPA Emergency Relief Fund and Theater Defense Fund.

Regarding concerns about the AFM-EPF, many wonder how The Fund will handle the economic problems as well as concessionary symphony agreements that may be negotiated in the next few years. The board would like to schedule another update from the pension fund at the upcoming conference and hopes Maureen Kilkelly is available.

### **Conference planning:**

The board reviewed comments from the 2008 conference delegate evaluations, spoke about a variety of possible presenters and speakers, expressed a desire to invite the entire IEB again this year, and addressed appointing a nominating committee and hiring a parliamentarian for the final day of conference activities.

**Orchestras in economic crisis:** Discussion included orchestras that have recently completed negotiations; the circumstances some orchestras are facing that may or may not cause them to consider opening their contracts; and reviewing which orchestras are preparing for negotiations at this time [Cleveland, Boston, Dallas, Buffalo, Charlotte, Chicago Lyric, Colorado, Indianapolis, Kennedy Center (Ballet), LA, Milwaukee, NYC Opera, Syracuse.]

As orchestras settle and when Laura prepares their bulletins, it was suggested that orchestras reopening their contracts should explain the specific reasons for their bulletins (Laura explained that was part of her reasoning for inclusion of the opening paragraph); Bruce said orchestras are calling to keep him apprised.

Bruce has expressed interest in traveling to NYC once the new SSD director is engaged. If the NJ Symphony is interested, he might be able to visit them at the same time.

Richard reviewed who was writing articles for the next issue of *Senza Sordino* – Bruce had two articles in mind; Len has not heard anything from Thalia Moore or Mary Plaine regarding domestic partnership tax issues addressed in a 2008 conference resolution, so has nothing yet; Newslets – Honolulu, Cincinnati, and NJ are expected to submit information; The League initiative to collect food for local food banks should be included (and on Orchestra-L) with encouragement to support this cause; there may also be something about the Midwinter meeting.

Richard reported that The ICSOM Directory should go to the Printer in the next 2 weeks.

**Next conference call (Saturday, March 21 – 1PM/12PM/10AM)**