

Western Massachusetts Sacred Harp Community, Inc.
Board of Directors

Annual Meeting
December 1, 2013 at 4:47 P.M.

The Octagon, Amherst College
Amherst, MA 01002

President Shea convened the annual meeting of the Western Massachusetts Sacred Harp Community at 4:47 PM leading **68b**.

With 59 registered members as of the date of the Annual Meeting, a quorum of at least 12 members was required to conduct business. The Clerk counted 22 members present for the annual meeting.

1. Minutes

President Shea read the minutes of the 2012 annual meeting aloud.

VOTED The membership voted to approve the minutes of the 2012 annual meeting as prepared.

2. President's report

President Shea delivered the President's report included below in its entirety:

It has been my great pleasure and privilege to serve as President of the WMSHC Board for the past year. The other officers of the Board are Matthew Leger- Small, Clerk, and Christine Andrews, Treasurer. Jeremy Galvagni is leaving the Board after serving on it for four years, and I would like to extend my gratitude to him for his service.

This year, the board continued in its usual role of maintaining financial records, consulting with convention officers about budget questions and other issues surrounding the convention, and overseeing CD sales. The Board has started working with an accountant, David Feder, who specializes in small business and nonprofit accounting. The board has found that having a professional responsible for filing our taxes gives us peace of mind that we will not make any mistakes that could endanger our nonprofit status, and it makes the role of Treasurer less daunting.

WMSHC continues to help members of this community travel to singings in other parts of the country as well as assisting singers from other singing communities traveling to our convention. This year we awarded over \$3,000 in travel grants, which was distributed among 15 recipients. Of these grants, 12 were awarded to singers traveling to Western Massachusetts either for our convention in March (11) or for the Pioneer Valley All-Day Singing (1). Three of these grants were awarded to singers from other countries, including two singers from Ireland and one singer from Poland.

WMSHC also provided financial support for several singing schools this year, including two pre-convention singing schools for adults and one for children, monthly singing schools at the third Sunday singing in Lenox, and a singing school focusing on rhythm and accenting.

WMSHC renewed its Go Daddy (web site) and PO Box accounts, and renewed its insurance through CDSS. WMSHC continues to maintain a supply of Sacred Harp books for sale and also decided to purchase two boxes of Shenandoah Harmony loaner books in order to support the local interest in singing from this new book.

The Board appointed two committees:

1) A Locating Committee to find a venue for 2014 convention. The committee has been successful in finding a venue and will give a report shortly.

2) A nominating Committee to prepare a slate of candidates for the 2014 Convention and the open spaces on the Board of Directors.

It has been wonderful to see our local singing community continue to grow and thrive over the past year. I am deeply grateful for the love and support that singers show for this community in so many ways, whether it be by keeping the loaner books, volunteering for a committee, teaching a singing school, helping out at the convention, or of course, cooking large quantities of food. Thank you all!

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Shea

3. Chair's report

In the absence of Emma Rose Brown, Chair of the 2013 WMSHC Covention, President Shea read the Chair's report included below in its entirety:

Most memorably, the 15th annual Western Massachusetts Convention was the last of our conventions to be held in the Center for the Arts building on the corner of South and Main Streets in downtown Northampton. It was a difficult fact to swallow for both singers who have sung 14 conventions at NCA, and those for whom their introduction to the space was this year. With this fact in the back of our minds throughout the weekend, rather than dampening the spirit, the room seemed to be brighter than usual, the sound more resonant.

We didn't know where we would be singing the following year, however, with knowledge of our locating committee hard at work; we could rest assured that we would not find ourselves singing without shelter in the upcoming year.

It was no small event. 440 people from 13 states and 5 countries registered, making it not only the largest convention we have ever had but the largest two day convention anywhere, and just shy of the size of the largest convention, The National, which last three days. It must be noted that we only had 440 registration cards, something to remind Dan Hertzler, although maybe we are getting too large for the hand-numbered and hand-delivered cards which he donates each year.

With 440 singers, we sang 210 songs, led by 165 leaders. Both new and experienced local singers seemed to occupy equal time in the square, something I think we could all agree, attests to the strength and success of our community.

Part of this strength seems to arise from the three singing schools, taught by Eliza Cavanaugh, Tim Eriksen, and Linda Shea, that were held leading up to the convention. It has become a tradition in the last few years and seems to be a good one – in addition to helping new singers to understand more about the tradition of singing conventions, it also helps to get more experienced singers into the holiday (convention) spirit.

With only a handful of unavoidable and minor mishaps, such as our broken coffee machines, the convention ran smoothly. The systems that are well established proved effective once again – systems which must be partially remade this coming year. It is a big job, most of which, I quickly learned, is not done by the chair. Not only do singers from Western Massachusetts contribute to the effort, but singers from up and down the Connecticut River and west into upstate New York. Our ability to support a large singing can only come from our large base of support.

I have found that good singings have good arranging committees, and this convention was no exception. Headed up by Linda Shea and Allison Blake Steele, their work was graceful and our convention, therefore, dancer-ly. At times, arrangers seem to be few and far between and I encourage singers who think they might be interested in learning this artful and valuable skill to attend more conventions, volunteer to help arranging, or even think about going to camp.

The rousing end to Saturday with everyone singing number 282 assured a good day for

Sunday.

Yet again we had the pleasure of socializing in John and Greta's house and barn – good food, good singing, in a beautiful house on a beautiful street.

While we decided not to have a children's lesson at this convention, I want to remind organizers of the upcoming singing convention of the community interest we have in involving the youngest generation of singers, and invite all to share their ideas around. Last year's young people's singing class led by Tom Malone and Allison Blake Steele was a huge success, maybe it's time for the second annual.

We saw many of the usual visitors, including large groups from Canada and Bennington. We gave out a substantial and praise-worthy sum of money in travel grants, many to young singers traveling across the country, such as my very own Jennie Brown.

There were clearly fewer states and countries represented than at previous conventions. While this absence did not lead to a weaker class or less meaningful gathering of friends and singing family, it does give us the opportunity to think about why singers from certain communities are not attending our convention.

It is without a doubt that we warmly welcomed our guests. The head of the welcoming committee (Mathew Leger-Small), host housing coordinator (Laura Timmerman), and food-lady (Cheri Hardy) made sure of that.

One of the most stirring moments in the convention was the memorial lesson given before the dinner session on Sunday. We couldn't have hoped for a more thoughtful, well spoken, and poised memorial committee then Peter Irvine and Christine Andrews and to lead us in thinking, praying, mourning, and singing for those who are sick and no longer with us. Our thoughts were made tangible as we recalled particular memories present in the room, and said farewell to the physical space that these memories occupy.

It was a convention of many 'lasts', and the energy and joy produced can only assure the success of the many 'firsts' we are to experience this coming year.

Respectfully Submitted,

Emma Rose Brown

4. Treasurer's report

Christine Andrews delivered the Treasurer's Report. The report in its entirety is attached hereto as Appendix A. The membership discussed the finances of the corporation. Topics included the increased emphasis on charitable giving by members during our enhanced membership drive in anticipation of increased expense for the convention; making merchandise more consistently available at locations other than our local singings; and the possibility of adjusting the cap on the funds made available for travel grants.

It was suggested that an online store component added to our website could be a feasible way to increase the availability of our CDs other merchandise. It was also suggested that the website could be updated to include a link for donations and that it may be worth paying for the website to be re-designed. Some members were concerned about taking on the expense of website design when additional expense could arise in light of the need for a new space for the convention. President Shea suggested the appointment of a website committee to explore the topic in more depth.

5. Elections

The membership voted by secret ballot for 2 vacancies on the Board of Directors and officers for the 2014 WMSHC convention using an instant-runoff voting system. A total of 31 votes were submitted, included absentee ballots submitted via email. The votes were tallied while the meeting proceeding.

6. Locating Committee Report

Christine Andrews delivered the Locating Committee's Report. The Committee had considered many locations which for one reason or another were not viable locations for the 2014 convention. Two locations in Holyoke were recently visited that stood out as strong possibilities. One was a rehabilitated industrial space and the other was the ballroom in the Holyoke City Hall.

Recently, however, we received word that Smith College is willing to rent Helen Hills Hills Chapel at a cost of \$400 for the weekend. Andrews thanked Emma Schwartz for her role in working with the Smith College Department of Religious Life. She noted that the Board had entered into contract negotiations for the space.

The membership discussed the logistics of hosting the convention in chapel. Particular attention was given to parking arrangements and dinner on the grounds. The Locating Committee noted that parking may prove to be an issue, but the pros for the space outweigh the cons. Street parking is an option and shuttling from the Smith parking garage will be explored. It was suggested that dinner on the grounds be at least partially catered to ensure that there is plenty of food. Guests would be encouraged to drop their food off at the chapel before parking.

Eliza Cavanaugh thanked the Locating Committee for their time and effort.

7. Travel Grant Committee

President Shea reported on behalf of the Travel Grant Committee that the information regarding travel grants that is posted on the website will be updated soon.

8. New business

A. Kshama Ananthapura suggested looking into the American Legion in Hadley as a possible location for the WMSHC convention, if Helen Hills Hills Chapel does not work out.

B. The membership discussed the need to appoint a Locating Committee for the regular Tuesday night singing in the month of January. Janet Sponberg suggested the Smith library. Tim Eriksen suggested that the singing might be able to happen at the Octogon. Kate Richardson noted the Laurel Park could be a possibility. Sasha Hsuczyk suggested looking into the Red Barn on Hampshire campus. Rowan Lupton suggested he could act as the Hampshire contact for that space.

There being no further business, President Shea adjourned the annual meeting of the Western Massachusetts Sacred Harp Community, Inc. at 5:50 P.M. leading *God Be With You* from the Harp of Ages.

Respectfully submitted,

Matthew Leger-Small
Clerk

Appendix A
Finance Report

	2009 Actual	2010 Actual	2011 Actual	2012 Actual	2013 Actual
RECEIPTS:					
Travel Grants (donor restricted)	1,000.00	1,000.00			1100.00
Donations at the Convention	3,147.00	3,161.90	3,614.00	1897.35	2868.00
Travel Grants Polish		3,059.00			
Donations at PVAD		224.00			410.00
Miscellaneous Donations	1,779.00		2,114.22		
Membership Dues Received	96.00	90.00	220.00	180.00	1549.00
Book Sales	1,315.00	860.00	702.50	740.00	542.00
CD sales	1,523.97	925.09	1,058.20	4384.89	2187.52
Donations at Monthly Singings		54.00			
Educational Projects-Donations Received	170.00				
Investment Income	226.94	124.00		22.09	24.18
Young People's Convention	1,301.50				
Other					

Total Receipts	10,559.41	9,497.99	7,708.92	7,224.33	8680.70
DISBURSEMENTS:					
Convention Expenses	(2,318.64)	(2,748.20)	(2,682.81)	1,914.78	3522.54
PVAD Expenses (donor restricted)					150.00
Travel Grants (donor restricted)	(2,092.00)	(1,650.00)	(1,025.00)		
Travel Grants Polish		(2,280.32)			
Travel Grants (unrestricted)	(2,078.00)			850.00	3096.40
Educational Projects					
Book Sales	(537.00)	(952.20)	(1,001.25)	700.50	2167.50
CD Sales	(1,293.90)				
Recording	(500.00)	(300.00)	(350.00)	350.00	550.00
Insurance	(425.00)	(460.00)			580.00
Library Materials					264
Legal Fees					515
Other Operating Expenses					
Postage/Office Supplies	(539.61)	(92.91)	59.00	63.00	72.86
Singing Schools	(200.00)	(350.00)		775.00	650
Donations to Other Organizations	(85.00)	(335.00)	(85.00)		160
Donations to Singing			(500.00)		

Facilities					
Young People's Convention	(565.00)	(224.18)			
Taxes	(155.00)		(35.00)	35.00	
Other Expenses				85.00	
Total Expenses	(10,789.15)	(9,392.81)	(5,620.06)	4,773.28	11,728.30
Net for the Year	(229.74)	105.18	2,088.86	2,451.05	-3047.60

Account Balances:

	Checking	Savings	Paypal	Total
2010	6,363.33	7,341.14	0	13,704.47
2011	8,776.29	7,363.33	0	16,139.62
2012	8,931.56	7,363.33	0	16,294.89
2013	5,568.03	7,387.51	366.59	13,322.13

Inventory as of 12/1/2013

The Sacred Harp, Denson Revision: 32

Shenandoah Harmony: 4

2000-2001 CD: Unknown

1999 CD: Unknown