



**Minutes of the Special Meeting of the
Board of Governors
Thursday, March 26, 2020
video conference
7:00-9:00 p.m.**

Voting Members Present: Mark Laing (Chair), Lynn Loder (from 7:30), Edie Hancock, Andre Pretzel, Kurt MacLeod, Mark Laing, Susanne Brown, Chris McCulloch (phone), Olga Milosevich (phone), Tirene Padget,

Ex-Officio Members Present: Diana Rutherford, Jack Bennet, John Murray.

Regrets: none

1. Meeting was called to order shortly after 7:00 p.m.

2. Business Arising from COVID-19

- a. Chair announced cancellation of meetings with Katherine Frank (KNRS) and K. Bekkers *et al.*
- b. Chair announced postponement of Open Annual Meeting to a date TBD later.
- c. **Facilities shutdown update:** John M. reported shutdown had happened in two stages. First with signs posted WRT social distancing and hand hygiene. Then, following the NS Declaration of Emergency, locking of doors and admission limited to four to five individuals at a time.
- d. **Update on staff layoffs and reduced hours:** John M. reported that hours had been reduced to 8:30 am – 4:30 pm. All office staff and custodian's hours reduced to 50%. Contract workers laid off but instructed to track their hours and bill later.
 - i. Kurt M. requested that the Executive seek professional guidance regarding work-reductions of the three salaried staff.
 - ii. Chris M. offered to find *pro bono* HR/legal advice.
- e. **Update on transition to online music classes:** Susanne B. reported that all her younger students had moved online, and parents had been positive. She thanked Andre for his assistance. Andre P. reported that his experience had also been positive and was offering to help other faculty members. They both agreed that there was no viable online option for ensembles. Jack B. reported that general uptake had been encouraging and noted that there is demand for instruction at this time. He went on to say that demand could grow, and more teachers would take the online option as the lock-down continued. John M. noted that the fee ratio for off-site was 80%/20% as opposed to the normal 70%/30%. He also reported that no exact uptake numbers were yet available.
- f. **Update on transition to online dance classes:** Diana R. reported that the Director of Private Career Colleges (NS) had agreed to allow the MCPA curriculum to be put online, despite the recognized limitations. She discussed various options for dance programs, would continue to explore alternatives, and report back to the Board with options.

- g. **Report on current and pending financial situation:** Kurt M. gave an overview of the current situation for the MCPA and noted that many other organizations faced similar situations.
- i. There is a great deal of uncertainty in any financial projection at this time.
 - ii. The Finance Committee will put together a cash budget through to September.
 - iii. Rental income has been reduced to near zero.
 - iv. Music instruction income will be negatively affected by the new sharing ratio.
 - v. Cash flow reduction could be “catastrophic” for the MCPA.
 - vi. Non-discretionary expenses, excluding staff payments, were projected to be \$85,000 up to September 2020.
 - vii. The MCPA is currently drawn \$35,000 on a line of credit of \$100,000.
 - viii. There is currently \$40,000 in cash in a savings account.
 - ix. The investment portfolio is valued at \$492,000 with \$285,000 of this unrestricted, though the latter had been earmarked for infrastructure. The rest was slated for scholarships.
 - x. Potential revenue sources:
 1. Reallocate money slated for infrastructure to operations
 2. Approach private donors (e.g., the Peircey family). Caveat: this will affect future capital campaign
 3. Launch a GoFundMe campaign
 - xi. It was also noted that sale value of the building was depreciated by the very weak commercial property market.
- h. **Update on potential government program assistance:** John M. reported on the recent conversations he had:
- i. Halifax MP Andy Fillmore (a former MCPA student) agreed to look into Federal assistance possibilities and contact the MCPA.
 - ii. Local MLA Gary Burrill said he would look into small business loan guarantees and a provincial government representative would report back to us.

John also reported that he had been inquiring about government assistance programs for individual faculty and staff.

3. **General discussion regarding contingency planning and actions going forward:** There was general discussion concerning timeframe for closure and messaging with stakeholders. It was decided, by consensus, that a working group consisting of senior staff and the Executive Committee would prepare recommendations regarding closure and messaging, and report back to the Board as soon as possible for review and approval.
4. Meeting adjourned at approximately 9:00 p.m.
5. Next Regular Meeting (video conference): Thursday, April 2, 2020, 7:00-9:00 p.m.