MMEA Annual Board Meeting,
Saturday, January 10, 2026
MINUTES

Virtual Meeting
8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. (Meeting adjourned at 10:05 a.m.)
Respectfully submitted by Wanda Borman, Staff
Link:
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85946497351?pwd=q9vBMpaiozWbooWtADTwnBjJkXao4d.1
Meeting ID: 859 4649 7351
Passcode: 764821

Meeting Recording
Meeting Chat
Meeting Agenda

MISSION

The mission of MMEA is to develop, promote, and support equitable and comprehensive music learning and teaching in Minnesota.

VISION

MMEA believes that music is core to the human experience. We support Minnesota Communities by affirming and further developing aesthetic sensitivity, self-expression, and creativity of music learners. MMEA strives for equality and excellence in music education by honoring and preserving lived experiences through intentional and informed practices.

Minutes: taken by Wanda Borman (Staff)

TOPIC / TIME ALLOTTED / DOCUMENTS	FACILITATOR	ACTION
Board Member Attendance Tracker *Members Present: Chris Rochester, Erin Berg, Nicole Thietje, Jerri Neddermeyer, Andy DeLuca, Jonathan Knutson, Jacob Kemenich, Joel Pohland, Michael Bjork, Abigail Van Klompenberg, Aaron Lohmeyer, Rachel Gorden Mercer, Chris Barnes, Kelly Taylor, Melanie Sheridan, Natalia Romero Arbeláez, Scott Rabehl (partial), Mark Gitch, David Davis, Michael Buck, Casey Clementson* *Members Absent: Eric Songer, Gunnar Aas, Iris Kolodji, John Pohland*		*Total number of board members: 22* *Bylaws Rev. 2024*

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Visitor: Matt Oyen Stepping into Orchestra VP early (shadowing BLambrecht & CPeterson)		
8:00-8:20am - Call to Order, Roll Call, M/V Statement Reading, and Approval of Consent Agenda ● Roll Call/Tuning (KH) ● Shout Outs 🙂 (KH) ● Consent Agenda (KH) ○ Minutes 09.06.2025 Meeting ○ Minutes from the Confidential Meeting on 12.07.2025 (only accessible by MMEA accounts and is CONFIDENTIAL) particularly the acceptance of the resignation of Karen Howard ○ Acceptance of the resignation of Sarah Minette (letter cannot be attached as it has confidential information) ○ Acceptance of the resignation of Seth Freundschuh ○ Acceptance of the Executive Board Appointments to Council of Chairs: Casey Clementson - Interval Editor, Gunner Aas - Advocacy Chair, Scott Rabehl - Retired Members Chair ○ Program Updates: Newsletter Links: 12.4.25, 12.15.25, 12.19.25 ○ Reminder: New Class of VPs are elected in January Election - we will have vacancies to recruit for appointment. MWC VPs, Collegiate, –Elementary, Jazz, (MBjork & JPohland offered to take extra terms in those positions. Will be official in ~~**9:35-9:45 10 minute break**~~	**Chris Rochester** **Jerri Neddermeyer**	**Decision:** Call to order/Consent Agenda: Quorum Confirmed Call to order/consent agenda/mtg mins from Sept. Minutes from Confidential Mtg. including all items to the left before the 9:35 break… in progress. Several positions remain open. Moved: Erin Berg Second: Mark Gitch Motion carried-Unanimous

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8:20 REGIONS ● Region Rep Reporting (Region Map) ○ Review Role of the Region Reps (CR) ■ Region Rep Resources/Info 2025 ○ Northwest Report - Gunnar Aas, C Barnes (RRE) ○ Northeast Report - Iris Kolodji (no report) ○ Central Report - Kelly Taylor **Emails went out. Discussed budget questions with a member.** ○ Southwest Report - John Pohland ○ Southeast Report - Melanie Sheridan **Questions about promoting Honors Choir and how it works can we promote other programs? JGN: If promotions come in a concise way and with a graphic if they wish, then it can be promoted as we are able. Tony Boldt said Melanie is doing a really good job.** ○ TC Loop Report - Rachel Gorden Mercer (RRE) **Rachel has rec'd emails thanking MMEA for the work they do.** ○ TC Central - Interim Natalia Romero Arbalaez: **has sent some emails and not received a response. Question about AS Auditions: Why is the timing 12N for the audition deadline. JGN: At the last minute directors have problems no matter the time whether that is midnight or 12N. We have resolved some challenges by allowing Directors to input their students and upload as auditions as they are ready, rather than having to do it all at once, and they can pay when they are finished. Having the deadline at noon allows staff in the morning to support teachers. We encourage teachers to think about the deadline as midnight of the day before so if they have challenges there is still time to fix them. Andy D., some additional communication around that will be helpful. Also, as a note, teachers should plan more time than**	**Erin Berg** **Jerri Neddermeyer**	**Information/ Discussion**

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they think to do the file uploads. Often it is a lot of data and it takes time for these large files to upload. ○ **Nicole T: Re: ACDA page discussion about All State and MMEA. Reached out, but no one emailed back. Plans to invite people to the choir open forum for more discussion. JGN: encourage people to talk to MMEA about MMEA things. This allows for more timely answers. It is expensive, but is underpriced for what we offer. Camp is expensive to run and we are asking people to basically work as volunteers for a whole week. Currently giving scholarships at nearly 100% of requests to help with the costs. When camp was $500 for a full week we were bleeding money. It is still not budget neutral but is getting closer. We offer a lot of value.**		
Advisory Chairs Reporting (Advocacy, Perpich, Interval, Retired, Community, MSHSL) ● Advocacy (Gunner Aas - no report as GA is new appointment) ● Perpich (Michael Buck) **Excited about MWC for re-licensure sessions. Suicide prevention session important for people to attend. Plus Culture and History of MN Native Americans and also Language and Culture. Also some sessions available online have been well attended. (MBuck Newsletter for Perpich) Pelsby has been in discussion about the current 2 level Arts licensure structure and considering a move to a single license structure. Pelsby has initiated effective practice and licensure for the arts changes. STAFF TO PROMOTE RELICENSURE SESSIONS ON SOCIAL MEDIA.** ● Interval (Casey Clementson): https://mmea.org/interval/ ○ Revised Guidelines Jan 2026 ○ **Interval: submission guidelines updated and the google form to upload articles. Next issue in May - Request for Region short articles or bullet points to highlight all of the things going across the state. Casey would like help with proof reading/editing for**	**Advisory Chairs**	**Information**

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spring issue. JGN: Flip Book - like it? Overall yes.

- Retired Members (Scott Rabehl - no report as SR is a new appointment)) **Glad to join and help as able.**
- Community - vacancy
- MSHSL (Mark Gitch) **Highschool league. 2 presentations at MWC. Been doing presentations with various groups. Band/Orch/Choir all participated in process revisions. Revising documents on rules/policy for contests. Adjudication forms will be reviewed next. Hoping to have it in place by the end of May for the next year.**

- Equity Action Team (David Davis) **DD: Equity team had a mtg. Of 30 on team 4 showed up. Wondering about task force documents - he is on some of the lists but has not been invited to the meetings - are they still operating? Budget Cuts in all schools are a big topic. What direction do we want the equity team to take action towards this issue? All State: wondering how does it align with our mission and values?**
  JGN: there are aspects of the AS program addressed for equity and access. Added repertoire requirements. Asked musicians that are more equitably represented over the state. Plus scholarships allow for access. Is it the most effective or efficient way to follow the mission? Strike a balance between not making new programs that further the pitfalls that we see on how AS was designed in the past and the new MMEA programs. When we are ready to renovate, then changes can be implemented.

  Chris: CR: pay close attention to what we are doing and what you are hearing when we get to MWC. There are things we need to address including turnover. We need some more consistency in leadership to make things more fruitful for the organization. Pretty confident we have good people in this space. After MWC he would like a deep dive into what is working well - what do we need to change. We want to make this space rewarding for all participants. Explore ways to make the financial burden lighter and the lifting easier.

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Task Force Reports MWC 2026 Task Force Meeting Report (NThietje) SEE BELOW AT THE END OF THE TASK FORCES BELOW. ○ 2026 MWC Schedule ○ 2026 Convention Center Map ○ Hosting Scripts ○ 2026 MWC Board Handbook (working) ● **All State Task Force Report** Andy DeLuca: **Rubric Updates are happening for 2027. Working to eliminate inconsistencies and inaccuracies. At this time it feels more cohesive. At this time Andy does not feel it is ticking all of the boxes for connection to MMEA's mission. We have had this model for a long time and it has stayed the same for the most part. The task force is thinking "What can we do with our current budget and staffing to make AS improve in one thing this year." It is a slow process. There has been some forward movement. To get to the mission a refresh will be needed. With a small handful of people we cannot make change, but if we have directors across the state to work with improvements, then we can make change. The increased costs of changing also need to be considered. There are regions in the state that do not send auditions. This is a telling indicator of perhaps in what areas we are not meeting needs. There are some meaningful things happening, but bigger changes need to happen. Chris: may know someone that would be willing to help with funding. Please pay attention to people and ask them their opinions etc.** **David D: Taking some courses in making systemic change in organization. The common theme is dialogue people work community relationships. If we only focus on tasks then movement cannot happen. The money is focused on the tasks. Can MMEA find funding to come together as a**	**TF Leads**	**Information Discussion**

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board in person to build more community relationships. Put more emphasis on the human piece. **Andy: Finds frustrating that the people that say this needs to change/happen and then only 4 people apply for a board position across the state. He is asking people to be on the board and they are not putting their names in. Everyone he talks to at conventions he invites to join the board. It is work - we all have families performance and teaching, but it is finding ways of making it doable and sustainable.** **There is a reputation of this board that it chews people up and spits them out.** **Still looking for some AS judges, tenor/ bass, percussion/flutes/sax. $5.50 per audition. Time commitment on average: typically Andy spends 10 -15 minutes on each audition. Rubrics this year provide more structure. Window of time for the judges to complete the full task - approx. 3 plus weeks.** **Natalia: It is a lot. But what is most helpful is to do it in small chunks so that the comments are meaningful. She uses the comments for the next year to help her students with auditions. It takes about 15 auditions to really cement the rubric. I find it helpful with students when judges provide encouragement to students in their documentations. MGitch: Great way to start - pick 6 - listen to them and start to get a frame for yourself before you start scoring. AD: would like the judges to have some practice files to listen to before they begin judging. JGN: this year judges are required to attend training with Jordan. We have some really solid judges. But a few that are unnecessarily harsh and then we do not ask them back. AL: Judging is a good introduction to board service. We keep a list of judges so even if not asked this time could be asked next time. Behavior Policy Work headed by Nicole and feedback from the AS task force. More comprehensive framework and responses to take in the context of an event happening. Still updating that for this year. If you have questions about AS Andy is willing to help with those conversations.**		

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- Middle/Secondary Classroom: (This link in the Agenda did not work) Aaron Lohmeyer DMMH :**Open many interesting submissions. Take some time and listen to the responses and the work the students are doing? CR: Seeing what students put together is great. Cool concept. JGN: Could move this to video format so we can share it more easily as we move forward. AL Re: budget - We are paying a clinician for this program and it is not currently budget neutral. This work could continue without a guest artist - please consider how this ought to fit in MMEA in the future. JGN: No new programs are budget neutral in the first year. You should feel really good about how this is shaping up and all of the entrants you have. CR: would like to talk about this with Aaron more offline. Chris thinks it should be blown up even more. Good new direction.**
- Middle/Secondary Ensemble+: Eric Songer **JGN: Mid Sec ensemble: full PLUG set up for MWC. Nick Gaudette, Edina is doing work in the area and helping out. We will likely shut down the office during MWC to go see his session Coacello! He is doing work with Eric Songer and the PLUG. As a board please remember to advocate for all programs.**
- Elementary - Michael Bjork **MB: One hope for elementary world is to think more holistically. Working to be more innovative in approach.**

As first year as Elem VP at convention hoping to spark those conversations. Elem AS choir has 253 students this year. Excited for that. JGN: Cap at 200 grades 4/5/6 160 students year 1, 180 year 2 (dropped 6th graders for this year) and then altered it and the count for more inclusion. The director was open to more students. What a joyful problem to have. MB If you know elementary people that are excited to try new things - send them to me. Elem music can break from the silo and the learning can be large- starting in elem - 12th grade.

- Fundraising Report -Aaron Lohmeyer **AL: fundraising: generating excitement and buzz for the work we are doing. Take a step back and realize that we are doing a lot of**

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lifting already. With MWC we are pushing the energy out and people already are excited about that.

We are looking at working with exhibitors to make sure they feel appreciated and that they understand the other ways their brand or organization can support MMEA and be SEEN. Check the bottom of the document to see all of the ways people can participate. This is the group lift. JGN: Exhibitors - thank them for being there, introduce yourself as a board member. If you see there is a business missing - reach out to them, say you missed them and tell them you would love to see them at MWC 2027.

Casey: Add an invitation to the host script for each person to visit the exhibit hall.

- **Fundraising Fall 2025.pdforce**

Task Forces General: JGN: we are looking for ways to help task forces as a staff. Andy has it been helpful to have Jordan as a staff support? - AD yes definitely. JGN: here is what I am considering… Jordan: staff for AS
Wanda: staff for MWC
Staff maybe to attend Reg Rep Mtgs. (or some of them)
We need to look at a way to have all of our Task Forces be productive. CR: watch emails for more information as we "inventory" what we are doing.
Task Force Doc.
task force doc -
https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1qOmhLPWvcEIHaDF9b5HbfqMEvPQ67CuZjtvy2URZszY/edit?gid=0#gid=0

MWC 2026 Task Force Meeting Report (NThietje)

- 2026 MWC Schedule
- 2026 Convention Center Map
- Hosting Scripts
- 2026 MWC Board Handbook (working)

MWC: NT Working on the WARM UP
Awards Task Force - needs to be re-visited after convention.
Nafme organizing a meeting on campus. CNafMe wants to Get

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the collegiates together to network. JGN: If we have the date/time Monday it can go on the MMEA calendar. **If they create a flier we could amplify that.** **Graphic and info can be sent to the regions to push out and the collegiate folks. More hands makes lighter lift for everyone.** **AL More volunteers on Saturday is so so helpful. 9:30 p.m. Sat. last year there were 4 ppl left loading sound shells. Keep an eye on emails. Region Reps please send out volunteer schedule sign up with your next Region communication.** **JGN: hosting schedule assigned.** **Need to assign the help for moving equipment. Closing rooms. If you would please put in your availability on all of the days.** **Use Me or On Call or Not Available** **DD: Host Run Down for new members? Go to the Volunteer room on the Mezzanine level on the first day and first thing after you arrive and get your folder. It will have everything you need. When you are hosting: Meet the presenter, make sure they are ready to roll. Read emails about hosting. Contact the office if there are issues with tech. Read all of your emails so you know what is available in the room for your presenter.** **CR: Not a lot of critical thinking - it is fairly easy.** **NR: I have a choir at AS and a hosting duty - can I set up the presenter and then leave?** **JGN: it is okay to start the session and give a certificate and then you can leave.** **Main Level: Ballroom only on Sat. will save about $12,000.** **Auditoriums: Aud 1 Choir perf./Aud 3 Amplified perf /Aud 2 Sessions** **Lower Level: Sessions/Exhibit Hall A** **Mezzanine: office/regis/warmup rooms /Coats/Cases.** **Thank you for making MWC happen and thank you to the staff.**		

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9:30 - 9:40 BREAK **Chris has received emails from some people about MWC:** **ICE/Student Safety: Email from people. Safety for MWC. There will be a response as to what we can and cannot do.** **CR: will have a notification so that students know that we are doing the best we can do to keep them safe. With legal counsel we are working to plan a response. To make sure the convention is safe for all.**		
New Business Check out the email shared by Chris to the board and his response regarding an incident at All State Camp. Because it involves a student it is confidential. Please let me know if you have any questions or further conversation. **Over the next stretch of time after MWC: review of how the organization functions. Responsibility to make the organization strong.** **Alignment with mission and values, culture. Opportunity to be more intentional and aligned. Pay attention to all things connected to your role at MMEA. Think about what is being done, what could be done.** **Please reach out to Chris if you want to have a further conversation.** **I am still figuring out some things about how the organization works. We are building a boat together. Effort to grow the organization in a healthy way that does not break anyone.** **Thank you to everyone who is showing up and working above and beyond.** **Anyone want to share new updates:** **DD: Is there any update on the awards for MWC? CR:Working on some changes, but with transition not all changes were able to be**	**Chris Rochester**	**Decision**

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organized and implemented. **DD:Funding: to help build community - more in person? What can we do as an organization to not just be focused on the tasks.** **CR: My plan is to document the needs and tasks to be able to see if we can move forward with add'l funding through my connection.** **Fr M Buck in messages: I can potentially provide space through Perpich for free. (Our leadership has changed in a good way, which will allow this)** **JGN: Relicensure. Re: Misconduct: Met with Executive Director Pelsby and their ethics lawyer. They are reviewing Statutes for reporting misconduct. Opportunity for some learning sessions in the next few months for training for these topics. (perhaps a panel: rural, private, large district, licensure folks) We do not have that at convention this year, but we can have some ethics conversations as we move forward.** **Chris: We are living in a moment that is heavy. People are carrying more than can be seen. Take care of yourselves and the people around you. Be attentive, thoughtful, and kind about the space you are holding for others. We need to work together to make the world a better place. I appreciate the time, care, and seriousness everyone brings to these meetings. Thank you for showing up.**		
10:05 a.m. ADJOURNMENT	**Chris Rochester**	**Decision Move: ADeluca moves to adjourn the meeting NThietje Second Unanimous.**

2025 Board Meeting Calendar

~~January 11, 2025~~

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~~Feb 13-15, 2025: Midwinter Convention!~~
~~March 8, 2025 – Install New Board members and required annual meeting of the general assembly~~
~~May 17, 2025~~
~~September 6, 2025~~

2026 Board Meeting Calendar

~~January 10, 2026~~
February 12-14, 2026 (Midwinter Convention)
March 14, 2026 – Install New Board members and Annual Membership Meeting
May 16, 2026
September 12, 2026

Resources

Board Contact Information
Conflict of Interest
Board of Directors Handbook

Tabled Business from Previous Meetings

1. Break out Groups: Worksheet
    a. Develop, Promote, Support
        i. Develop (related to our direct student programming)
        ii. Support (related to our professional development programming)
        iii. Promote (related to our advocacy)
    b. Equitable and Comprehensive
    c. Learning and Teaching
2. NEXT MEETING for Task Forces: Working Strategies - Walking the Walk