YCMEA Minutes- Saturday, November 15, 2025

Notes about the minutes:

1. If you open the minutes in Google Docs and show the tabs on the left side, it will allow you to click on any of the headings to jump to that page.
2. Board members' emails have been linked at the beginning of the minutes.
3. The titles of our festivals are links that will take you to the specific page on our website.

Call to Order: 10:07 am

Present: Jenny Thompson: president, Randy Wright: vice president, Chris Wright: treasurer, Melanie Lynch: secretary, Kayla Solorio, Brandon Coz, Shawn Pollard, Maggie Fenske, Eric Dale, Joel Santana

Rose and Thorn from attendees; each director shared their positives and their struggles for the year thus far.

Approval of Minutes- Kayla Solorio moves to approve the previous meeting's minutes, Chris Wright seconds. Motion passed unanimously

Treasurer's Report-
Bank Balances:
Checking Account-$7,545.62
Main savings (Business savings)- $1,456.19
Second Savings (Ernest Ortega Scholarship Fund)- $2,366.55

Dues are $25 at the beginning of each year. Dues can be paid separately or can be added on any festival registration. In order to register for any event or festival, you will need to also be a member of the organization or to pay the non-member fee which is equivalent to the membership fee.

Any checks should be made out to YCMEA.
Please send all dues, registration forms, and payments to:

Chris Wright
2980 S. Rainbow Ave
Yuma, AZ 85365
Cell number: (928)246-6461

Important note: Please make sure that every time you pay for something for YCMEA you include the billing statement. They are all on the website. Without the billing statement, our treasurer will not know who the payment belongs to and what it is for.

Old Business

Festival of Excellence (Honor Band and Honor Choir)-

1. Chairman- Melanie Lynch, Co-Chair Kayla Solorio

2. Rehearsals will be once a week during the months of January and February and will be held at Woodard Junior High School. The specific day of the week will be announced once the guest conductors have been chosen.
3. We will have a "full day" rehearsal during the school day
    a. The all day rehearsal will happen from 9:00 am- 1:00 pm on Friday, February 27th.
    b. Transportation for this rehearsal is to be taken care of by the students' school/director.
4. The concert will be on February 28th at 2:00 PM. The concert will be held at Woodard Junior High School and is open to the public.
    a. Donations from this concert are what pay for the Ernest Ortega Scholarship.
5. Each year we take a tour with the performers at the end of the season.
    a. Students generally perform at two different schools and then go to Wild River for bowling and pizza.
    b. Tour will be held on Thursday, March 5th during the school day.
6. Fees
    a. Honor choir fees are $30 per student
    b. Honor Band fees are $5 per auditions (whether the student makes the ensemble or not) as well as $25 for participation.
    c. Fees collected are to pay for:
        i. Honor band/honor choir t shirts
        ii. Buses for tour
        iii. Pizza and bowling
        iv. Any music purchases needed
7. Guest conductors
    a. Brandon Coz for Choir
    b. Sheryl Clifton for Band

Honor Band

1. The YCMEA honor band is open to students currently in grades 6 through 9.
2. Students are chosen by audition:
    a. Two etudes will be selected (percussion may have additional etudes and will audition on snare and mallets)
    b. A scale sheet will be sent out to include major scales up to 4 flats and 2 sharps (concert pitch) and a one octave chromatic scale.
        i. No additional points will be given to students playing additional octaves.
        ii. Students who play only one octave of any two octave scales will receive half points.
        iii. Scales must be memorized for the audition.

    c. There will be a short sight reading selection for students.
3. Audition fees are $5 per audition; Some students audition on multiple instruments. Those students will pay for each of their auditions.
    a. These fees are due for any student signed up for an audition, even if they do not show for their audition.
4. Auditions will be held on the morning of December 6th at Woodard Junior High School. Please plan to attend with your students. If you are unable to attend, please have another music teacher or another adult present in your place.
    a. Auditions are done live with a music educator as a judge. In special circumstances, we can arrange for a recorded audition.
        i. If your student needs a recorded audition, please let Melanie Lynch know at least a week in advance so that the scales and sight reading can be sent to you for that student. You will then need to bring a device to play the audition on in order for the judge to critique the audition.
    b. Audition music was sent out on October 9th.
    c. Audition registrations are due by November 21st
5. Judges
    a. Flute- Sheryl Clifton
    b. Clarinets-Chris Wright
    c. Saxophones- Dave Vosler
    d. Trumpets- Randy Wright
    e. Low Brass- Shawn Pollard
    f. Percussion- Brandon Coz

Honor Choir

1. The YCMEA Honor Choir is open to students in grade 6-12.
2. There is no audition for the honor choir.
    a. Students will be submitted by their music teacher.
    b. There is no limit to how many students a director may submit.
    c. Students do not need to be in choir at their school to participate as many of our schools do not have a choir program.
        i. Before submitting students, please make sure that they: can match pitch, can hold on to harmonies/parts, and can blend with other singers.
3. Registrations due: December 17th

Solo and Ensemble

1. Chairman- Kayla Solorio
2. Registrations due: March 27th
3. This festival is open to any musicians (band, choir, orchestra, guitar, etc) at any level elementary through college whose teacher is a member of YCMEA.
4. The festival will be April 18th at Crane Middle School
5. Cost is $5 for solo and $15 for ensemble
6. Accompaniments may be live or pre-recorded.

    a. If you use pre-recorded, please bring a device to play the accompaniment on.
    b. Piano will be provided.
    c. If you need any large equipment, please reach out to Kayla ahead of time to make sure she can accommodate the request.
7. Please bring an original of the music for the judge.
8. If you are interested in judging, reach out to Kayla.

Junior High/Senior High Choir Festival

1. Chairman- Megan O'Brien
2. The festival is tentatively scheduled for March 12th
    a. It will be at Kofa High School
    b. This festival is open to choirs of all sizes and grade levels.
    c. If you are interested in judging the festival, please reach out to Megan.
    d. Registrations due February 12th.
3. No updates at this time

Large Ensemble/ ABODA Festival

1. No updates at this time.
    a. We need a location
2. Last year, Todd Livingston from Arizona Band and Orchestra Directors Association reached out as ABODA is making an effort to include more rural areas in the state.
3. Jenny gave him the date of March 19th
4. We are waiting from confirmation from ABODA.
    a. If the ABODA festival does not happen, we will move forward with our normal Large Ensemble Festival
        i. If this happens, we will need a chairman for this event.
5. Melanie will reach out to District One about using Post

Celebration of Strings

1. Chairmen- Danae Nieto-Freifeld and Megan O'Brien
2. This is a large orchestra festival where students from across the county come together to create 2-3 combined orchestras of different levels.
    a. Level 1 is for beginners
    b. Level 2 is intermediate
    c. Level 3 is for more advanced students
        i. We have not done level 3 for several years.
3. Cost for the festival is $5 per student
    a. This pays for their dinner
    b. If the director and/or any chaperones would like to have dinner that day, please include that at registration. Cost is $5 per meal.
4. Additionally, there is a $25 fee for each director who registers students.
    a. This goes towards purchasing music for the event.

5. Rehearsal goes from 1:00 PM until 4:00
6. After the rehearsal there will be
    a. A practice for getting on and off stage
    b. A guest performance
    c. Dinner
    d. A quick gathering/tuning
7. The concert will start at 6:30 PM in Post Auditorium
8. Paperwork is complete for facilities use
9. Music will go out in December
10. Festival is May 1
11. Registrations are due by March 15th
12. We do have Post and 4th Ave
13. We should reach out to Dr. Christina Kim as a clinician
14. Chamber strings is asked to perform; Jenny will talk to Danae

Desert Band Festival

1. Committee: Melanie Lynch, Eloisa Arviso
2. This festival is a large festival for our newer band students.
    1. This can be students from grades 5 up including high school beginning band students.
    2. Performers will be divided into three levels: elementary band, middle school beginning band, and middle school intermediate band
3. Festival Dates: May 7 and 8
    1. Students will participate on one of the days; we do two days to accommodate the large number of students participating.
4. Fee- $25 director fee and $5 per student. The director fee is separate from the membership dues.
5. Music will go out in December
    1. Jenny and Kayla will help with the music selection process
6. Cost for the festival is $5 per student
    1. This pays for their dinner
    2. If the director and/or any chaperones would like to have dinner that day, please include that at registration. Cost is $5 per meal.
7. Additionally, there is a $25 fee for each director who registers students.
    1. This goes towards purchasing music for the event.
8. Rehearsal goes from 1:00 PM until 4:00
9. After the rehearsal there will be
    1. A practice for getting on and off stage
    2. A guest performance
    3. Dinner
    4. A quick gathering/tuning
10. The concert will start at 6:30 PM in Post Auditorium
11. Melanie did the paperwork for Fourth Avenue JH and will request dinners
12. Registrations due March 21st

Scholarships

1. Chairman- Randy Wright
2. Committee- Chris Wright, Jenny Thompson, Joel Santana, Melanie Lynch
3. Each year, YCMEA awards scholarships for summer music camps
4. The process has several steps
    a. Applications
        i. There is an online application
        ii. Students should answer in complete sentences
        iii. Along with the application, students need a letter of recommendation from their current music teacher.
        iv. Due January 16th
        v. The committee will meet to review applications.
    b. Selected students will move on to the audition process. The audition consists of
        i. A prepared solo
            1. Pieces may be accompanied or unaccompanied.
                a. If the piece has accompaniment, it should be performed as such, but the accompaniment may be recorded or with a live accompanist.
                    i. Finalists will be given one rehearsal with a pre-selected accompanist. These will be schedule through YCMEA.
                    ii. Finalists may also use their own accompanist.
        ii. Scales
            1. Middle school students- full range major scales up to 4 sharps and 4 flats and full range chromatic
            2. High school students all major scales and chromatic full range
            3. Scales should be memorized
        iii. Sight Reading
        iv. Interview
            1. The committee will conduct a short interview with each finalist
    c. Updates- Randy has talked to some schools to have him talk to the kids about coming out to talk to kids about scholarships.
        i. Committee had a meeting with Margie and we were able to make changes for the high school scholarship. Please check the website for updates on the John A. Dallabetta Music Scholarship
    d. Ruby is working on the video
    e. Review of applications January 23rd at 5 PM, location TBD
    f. Auditions on March 11 at Woodard at 4:30

Bank Changing

We have discussed changing banks for a while now due to the fact that our current bank closes at 4:00 PM which makes it difficult to make deposits and other transactions. We held off on the process until the 501c3 undertaking was complete.

1. Chris suggests Washington Federal
    a. Statements are clearer
        i. Previous bank did not give an itemized statement
        ii. Open M-Th 9-5, F 9-6
        iii. 3 accounts would be free
        iv. We can do online and mobile deposits
    b. Melanie Moves that we change our bank from Foothills to Washington Federal, keeping the signers as Christine Wright and Jennifer Thompson, Joel Santana Seconds the motion. Motion passed unanimously

Articles of Amendment-

This was needed to change Jenny's address and add Randy Wright as the vice president for Statutory Agent and Manager

- Paperwork was submitted by Jenny

Other news:

- Danae Freifeld is most likely moving away; AWC would then need a new string instructor
- Shannon Bates- Our Bertrands Rep- Couldn't come because of the storm 858-472-5417
- Junior High Nights
    - Kids had fun
    - They liked seeing each other at the parades
    - We suggest doing something for concert season as well
    - Yuma Catholic is thinking about adding a JH night, junior high directors were in favor of this.
- Creative Arts Academy- Jessica Beltran is working on this; they do lessons for voice and piano as well as children's choir and adult choir. It is an auditioned group.
- Concert at St. Pauls Nov 22, 7 PM, "We Are One"- all about unity and community.

Upcoming Concerts:

- Nov 22nd- AWC students going to a symphony concert
- Wednesday, November 19th, AWC Jazz concert in the Little Theater at AWC, 7 PM
- November 24th, Community Band Concert, Schoenig Center at AWC, 7 PM
- Pep Band Patio Concert- Tuesday Nov. 25
- Light Parade- December 13
- WJHS Choir Orchestra- December 16, 6 PM
- WJHS Band - December 18, 6 PM
- Gowan/Salida Concert Nov 18th, 5 PM
- Crane Middle School Concert, Dec 3, 6 PM
- Crane Dist. Elementary and CTMS Middle Bands Concert, Dec 9, 5:30
- YHS Jazz Showcase, December 15th 6 PM, YHS Band Room
- YHS Full Concert, December 17th, 6PM Snider

Retirement Dues for next year

- Do we want to change the dues for retired educators

- Do we want to have a lifetime membership
- Randy moves to keep the dues as written in the bylaws; all fees will remain as written at $25 per academic year for all levels of membership (active, retired, and sustaining memberships- individuals , institutions, and corporations who are interested in supporting YCMEA). Randy withdrew his motion so we could discuss it at a later date due to the bylaws already being updated.
- Joel would like to change it to a lifetime membership or a lowered fee.
- We will discuss at a later meeting

Winter Guard

- District wide for the High School District
- Practice days- T-Th and Saturday
- Auditions at Kofa and rehearsals at Yuma, and Cibola on Saturdays
- Students involved in both honor band and winter guard will be excused from winter guard rehearsals in order to attend the weekly honor band rehearsals. The Saturdays do not conflict.
    - Per color guard coach email received after the meeting.

Next meeting: January 17, 2026, 10 am at Crane

Adjourned: 12:10 PM