

Sweet Adelines New Zealand – Regional Management Team

Meeting minutes: 11 September 2021 – Via Zoom

Present: Leigh Whitelaw (Team Coordinator), Kerry Stewart (Education Coordinator), Carolyn Currington (Directors' Coordinator), Miriam Spragg (Membership Coordinator), Jenny Edwards (Communications Coordinator), Ann-marie Francis (Events Coordinator)

Apologies: Jo Maxwell (Marketing Coordinator), Julie Mansell (Finance Coordinator) attended briefly at the end of the session.

Approval of minutes from previous meetings - done

Welcome to Ann-marie who is meeting with the team for the first time today.

Matters Arising

- Kerry is still working with SAI to have chorus competing at Harmony Aotearoa count in fulfilling the 3-year competition expectation. It is disappointing to note that we still have had no response to several enquiries and Kerry will follow up again.
- Need a copyright expert to call upon. Leigh will advertise to the Region for someone who has competency in this area to create a document for reference by those who purchase and perform music within our membership.
- Updating the Strategic Plan 2020-2024 – team members are to each check relevant sections of the plan and send amendments to Jenny, who will update the master copy and file to the website.

Coordinators' Reports

Finance

- Chorus Finance Coordinators and Chapter at Large members were notified via email of the new rate for membership to SANZ for the next 3 years.
- Julie has advised that she needs to resign the position due to personal circumstances and would like to hand over the role before the end of year. Leigh will approach Katrina to help out with the XERO transactions in the short term if necessary.
- The team agreed that the finance role would ideally be split so that we have a resource person doing the XERO transactions and membership finance, another person could work with the events team dealing with related payments and refunds, and the RMT Finance person would be taking care of the bigger picture planning, reporting and presenting accounts to the auditor etc.
- The bank account authorisation saga for Julie has progressed to the stage of signed forms having been received.
- Kerry obtained agreement from the Prue Blythe Trustees to add Julie Mansell as a trustee in her role as RMT Finance Coordinator.
- The PBT raffle was drawn while we were together as team, using an online random number generator.
- Julie will create a reference paragraph for our website to direct Chorus Finance Coordinators on how they should legally be compensating Directors and others that may provide services to a chorus. We will notify choruses once this has been loaded.

Education	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A number of planned face-to-face education events will need to be moved into 2022 owing to travel restrictions: Palmerston North One Day Big Sing, Nelson and Wellington quartet workshops and the Christchurch visual communication workshop. Kerry/Carolyn to work with faculty and choruses to reschedule these events. • With the postponement of this year's workshops Kerry is now researching a Virtual education event for the 6-8 November weekend. • Kerry, Leigh and Carolyn held two zoom sessions with Team Coordinators and Directors to establish the direction of an event for 2022 and other topics. It was great to have representation from all choruses. • Region 34 have been looking at a venue for 2023 and will have more details to us soon. The uncertainty of travel may affect plans for this event, but we continue to monitor the situation. • Kerry recently attended some virtual classes from BHS Harmony University (in lieu of attending an international symposium or etc) with the purpose of identify potential new faculty for the region.
Membership	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current membership trends – there has been little change in recent months. A few choruses have gained new members which offsets member departures from other choruses. • TC's liaison – this role has been part of the Membership resource team, but we now realise it makes more sense to move this to the RMT Team Coordinators resource team. Miriam will let Carol know and Leigh will work with her to define the role.
Marketing	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel in Tune – Jo has sent an email out via SANZ Communications, to ask choruses for material to advertise our Region. We have a member experienced in voice work ready to record the voiceover and assistance in video editing is being provided by another member. • Jo to create a 'check list' for the advertising/promotion of SANZ events, public versus members only
Team	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RMT Resource team roles – job descriptions say the term is one year. These all need to be reconfirmed. Team to check the document and verify those in your team are happy to continue and please confirm with Jenny who holds the master. • Jenny is maintaining the Decision Register which is kept in our shared Dropbox file as an easy reference back to past significant RMT decisions and why they were made. • Leigh has clarified and tidied up the Policy Book segment on allowances paid to persons involved with our annual convention/competition (Jenny to update this to the Policy Book). • RMT to keep in mind advertising to Japan any online/live streams events we may host – they are still on zoom mode and thirsty for education. In future would also be keen to attend events here, especially convention when that is possible. • In line with our desire to improve our cultural awareness Leigh will start discussions with TCs and Directors for a representative on the RMT resource team with knowledge and understanding specifically of Māori culture but also aware of other cultural needs. This role may also cover other aspects of DEI or a separate role may be required.

Communications	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The last couple of months have been busy for communications going out to members and fielding enquiries. • Applications for 2022 RMT positions were to close 30 September. This year the Team, Membership, Communications and Education roles are to be readvertised. Given the current motivational struggles our members are facing with the changing covid scenarios it was decided that this is not a good time to call again for applications. We will do that later in October/early November • Relating to the above, all incumbent RMT members are to look at their roles and see what aspects of it are crucial to the RMT coordinator position, and what could be delegated out to a RMT resource person – so that the RMT roles are less daunting to potential applicants. • A plea was made to TCs and Directors at recent zooms for the Education role as nominees are meant to be sent to SAI on 1 October. Nothing has resulted from that so Jenny will email SAI to say that we will not have any nominations within that timeframe. • Addaline – December edition to be a regional roundup format and Jo will shortly be communicating with choruses on this. • RMT has read and analysed responses to SAI's latest Annual Regional Evaluation from our region's choruses. The responses are generally positive. One comment related to needing more support for small choruses. This is already a key part of our strategic planning and Carolyn is making good progress on that. We recently chose to use some of the Internationally Funded Visits for visits from Carolyn to small choruses as needed.
Directors'	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carolyn has created and shared with Directors a spreadsheet to track songs in the process of going through the Song Assessment Tool (SAT) and asked directors if someone in their chorus could assess the massed songs not yet put through the process: San Francisco Bay Blues is now the only regional song that needs someone to put it through the tool. Questions have been raised regarding the relevance of comments that have been added to the Hine/Pokare medley on the SAT. Carolyn/Kerry to follow this up. • Reviewing the massed song list will be on the agenda for the 2022 Directors Retreat. • Carolyn recently had Directors complete an anonymous survey about the expenses and/or payments they receive in recognition of their work, and contract information. This was to assist a chorus starting a director search. Most Directors replied. Choruses have different incomes and membership numbers and this sometimes dictates the budgets that can be set with regard to Director compensations. The survey information will be sent to directors now and then held by Carolyn to assist Directors and TCs as needed. This data will be reviewed every few years to keep it up to date. • Some choruses are having less attendance at zoom rehearsals this time around. • A query was received around vaccinations and whether choruses can or should mandate this. RMT is unable to offer specific advice on this. We will continue to be guided by and pass on the NZ choral federation and the government advice. Choruses need to put into place the recommended safety precautions to protect their members. • Carolyn will get the ball rolling to choose a director for the STAR chorus for next year's event. • Carolyn has been in touch with several of our smaller choruses recently to offer support.
Events	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nailed It Nelson Quartet workshop 27/28 August 2021 had to be postponed due to Covid level restrictions. Of the 31 people who registered only 3 asked for a refund. This has now been postponed until next year due to lack of available dates that suit faculty.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Visual Leaders workshop that was planned for October and the Advanced Quartet workshop in Nov have also been postponed until next year. • Accommodation was booked at the IBIS for the travelling members of the RMT for this Sept meeting, and then cancelled it when the decision was made to hold the meeting via zoom due to covid restrictions. • Planning will soon begin for the 2022 Directors retreat, January 21 to 23 to be held in Napier. • Ann-marie will continue the research regarding an online registration system for convention and/or other SANZ events, keeping in mind we can't utilise some sites that require an exchange rate to be applied.
CONVENTION	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have potential locations for Convention 2022 in Christchurch. Pencil bookings have been made with a maximum of 9 risers available. • SAI required the names of a CRC and CC for 2022 so we have filed Jacqui Binnie and Leigh in those roles in the interim will confirm a registrar as needed. • Convention 2022 – at the recent zoom sessions most chorus directors and TCs expressed that the need this time is less for something competitive and more a celebration of singing and being together, and something to work towards. There could possibly be an SAI competition option with judging by video (video protocols provided by SAI). Alongside the STAR chorus, the performance category introduced at Harmony Aotearoa is a less pressured opportunity for choruses and one we are keen to present again. Some other category options are also being considered. • Harmony Aotearoa had a special allowance for non-members singing in choruses or quartets. Due to our currently decreasing membership numbers and related planning needs this will not be the case for the 2022. Non-members will be welcome to attend as audience members (may be limited by the size of venue) and also the education classes by paying a non-member fee. • 2023 – Miriam will make investigations in Auckland with a date change necessary to secure the Aotea Centre if the combined Region 34 event is not possible. • Sweet Adelines International have recently asked all regions for input regarding regional competitions which would be judged by video under agreed protocols. SAI acknowledges that each region is faced with different challenges produced by the COVID-19 pandemic, therefore they are asking for our input. Kerry will respond to this request following the convention planning meeting with Miriam, Leigh and Jacqui on 16 September.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting Closed: 3:30pm. • NEXT MEETING Tues 26th October evening zoom, starting 7.30pm.