



# { *Ontario Chapter* }

Annual General Meeting

1st May 2021 - 2:00-3 PM

Over Zoom

## **Minutes:**

Members in attendance:

Carole Blankenship (guest)	Shannon Coates	Irene Ilic	Erin Milley-Patey
Allen Henderson (guest)	Linda Condy	Amanda Kind	Dann Mitton
Katy Clark (SNATS)	Chelsea Cushman	Judith LeBane Kane	Colleen Morrison
Lucia Santilly (SNATS)	Mark Daboll	Mei Lee	Renee Salewski
Sarah Stapleton (SNATS)	Brooke Dufton	Elizabeth Lepock	Charlene Santoni
Sarah Amelard	Heather Faris	Chad Louwerse	Suzanne Schaafsma
Allison Arends	Linda Fletcher	Julie Ludwig	Jennifer Swanson
Lisa Brillon	Abigail Freeman	Lorna MacDonald	Darnell Thomas
Amanda Brunk	Gloria Gassi	Elsbeth Maynard	Sharon Tikiryan
Jennifer Carter	Joan B. Heels	Elizabeth McDonald	Michelyn Wright
Torin Chiles	Bethany Horst	Nicky McGrath	

Proxies:

Kimberly Barber	Barbara Collier	Gail Hakala	Sofia Peycheva
Marie Baron	June Crowley	Melissa Hakala	Kathleen Tapp Mock
Margie Bernal	Pamela Derksen	Jill Kelman	Alison Taylor
David Bertram	Edwina Douglas	Robert Loewen	Cyndi Van Arragon
Natasha Campbell	Michael Faulkner	Rachel Mallon	Tammy Whetham
Daniel Cabena	Arlene Gray	Kyra Millan	Amanda Wilhelm
Norma Churchill	M.J. Johnson	Kati Pearson	

Quorum is one third of members, so for this meeting a quorum consists of 46 members. We have 65, including members in attendance and proxies sent.

#### 1. Call to Order

#### 2. Roll Call/Permission to Record:

- Members present typed their names into the Zoom meeting chat to allow for easy recording of correct spellings.

- Joan Heels moved to approve recording of the meeting for archival purposes.

- Judith LeBane Kane seconded.

- Motion carried.

- The meeting will be recorded by Bethany Horst for archival purposes.

#### 3. Welcome, Land Acknowledgement, Opening Remarks, Recognition of Founding Members:

- Broad Land Acknowledgement by Renee Salewski, addressing the fact that our members hail from all over Ontario, and that our recognition of Indigenous lands should go beyond words into deeds.

- Moving opening address from Mei Lee acknowledging the difficulties we have all faced this year - all joined in a moment of silence.

- Mei also celebrated that the challenges of the pandemic did not slow our chapter down. Rather, we had a very productive year, with both our Vocal Showcase and Professional Development Day online, with the creation of a policy and procedure manual to guide the executive in our roles, and with our upcoming survey (to roll out in June) geared to improving how our chapter serves our members, and growing our membership.

- Thanks to executive members, and the founding members of our 33-year-old chapter.

#### 4. Greetings from NATS:

- Carol Blankenship (NATS President) thanks NATS Ontario for inviting her to attend. Her greetings welcomed new members, thanked long-standing members, and acknowledged the difficulties faced by all throughout the year. She drew attention to the ways in which NATS has tried to help members this year: providing resources, assisting members who could not afford their dues, etc.

- She also drew our attention to exciting upcoming events: the strategic plan for our future; the NATS YouTube channel; the NATS website will be being refreshed; mentorship opportunities; the summer workshop.

- Finally, she expresses that she welcomes direct contact from any and all members.

- Allen Henderson (NATS Executive Director) also made a brief statement. He congratulated NATS Ontario for sharing NATS' programs so well, and pointed to a huge increase in National Auditions submissions as a cause for celebration.

-Like Carole, he expressed his welcome of contact from any and all members.

5. Adoption of Agenda:

-Small corrections to the agenda:

-The meeting year was corrected from 2020 to 2021, and time was corrected from 2 pm to 2-3 pm.

-The numbers listing SNATS reports were corrected from 4 to 7.

-Lisa Brillon moved to accept the agenda as corrected.

-Renee Salewski seconded.

-Motion carried.

6. Approval of Minutes of the 2020 Annual General Meeting:

-Joan Heels pointed out that in the minutes, "Motion carried" was left out on several occasions.

-Lorna MacDonald moved to accept the minutes as amended.

-Joan Heels seconded.

-Motion carried.

7. Reports from Officers:

7.1 District Governor: Gloria Gassi

-Gloria shared a very polished pre-recorded presentation regarding recruiting, diversity and inclusion, projects/events, and advisory committees.

-NATS Ontario currently has ~130 members.

-The District Governor Annual report was submitted to NATS April 22, 2021.

-She expresses thanks to the members of our advisory committee, and this year also our nominating committee.

7.2 Treasurer: Lisa Cosens Brillon (interim)

-Lisa shared a detailed excel spreadsheet and elaborated on it in her report.

-Balances as of April 30, 2021:

-Admin Account - \$13,292.62

-Vocal Showcase Account - \$1212.83

-PayPal Account - \$566.92 (with Dr. William's fee already been paid)

-Total = \$15,072.37

-GIC - BMO - \$11,870.00 (approximately)

-Tax receipts in the amount of \$ 1025.00 (Line P12) shows amounts less PP fees) were also issued to all 11 donors.

-On behalf of the chapter, Lisa issued thanks to Dr. Joan Heels and the Heels Family Foundation for the generous donation of \$3000.00 to our Vocal Showcase.

- In January the Chapter Financial Report was filed with big NATS (this financial report is for our fiscal year January 1, 2020 - December 31, 2020)
- Chapter Income Tax return was filed in March to CRA.
- Lisa is looking forward to training our incoming treasurer Mike Fan this coming fiscal year, and would like to thank the executive for their support, as she stepped-in as interim treasurer.

### 7.3 Special Events & Projects Director: Renée Salewski

- Renee reported on how different this year was for special events and projects.
- Our professional development day last year was cancelled due to the onset of the pandemic.
- The social events usually associated with the vocal showcase were substituted with bi-weekly lead-up NATS Ontario Chats on Zoom. These were successful and well-attended, and will be resuming shortly.
- The special events and projects team created an Instagram account to increase connection with membership.
- Today's PD day was a wonderful event, and some attendees also participated in a social luncheon over Zoom.
- We will continue to find ways to connect virtually over the coming months/year.
- The special events and projects team thanks the membership for continuing to engage, and being willing to explore new avenues of connection.

### 7.4 Vocal Showcase Director: Bethany Horst

- Bethany expressed thanks to everyone for pivoting quickly to a virtual form for our fall vocal showcase, and to AuditionWare for accommodating our requests.
- The showcase was very successful, with nearly 300 singers from 60 studios, and 60 adjudicators (some of whom did not even enter students, but rather adjudicated entirely as volunteers).
- Gave out almost \$9000 in scholarships, including a special 3rd place category, since we had extra funds this year.
- Were able to hold an online finale concert.
- It is difficult to plan for the fall. Last year there was no question that online was the correct choice, but this year is less sure. A hybrid version of the showcase is in the works. A virtual showcase has many benefits, including allowing students to participate from a larger geography area, so it would be nice to keep some element of this in the future.
- There may need to be a co-director position added to allow for a virtual and an in-person showcase, as this adds up to twice the work.

### 7.5 Liaisons: Allison Arends

- Allison reported on behalf of all the liaisons.
- These are newly formed positions, and the position description is still

evolving, but the idea is to better-represent the wide demographic and geographic locations, and bridge the gap between executive and membership.  
-Each liaison introduced themselves, and all encouraged the membership to respond to the survey when it rolls out in June.

## 7.6 SNATS Chapter Updates

### 7.6.1 U of T – Katy Clark

-Katy expressed thanks for welcoming SNATS to the AGM. She reported that U of T SNATS chose in August to plan an entire year of virtual events. The chapter facilitated purchasing singers masks for a number of students making a bulk order, and held a “build your own larynx” event.

-The chapter held their annual speaker series including 1) Dr. Shannon Coates - making the most of online voice lessons, 2) Jennifer Taverner - nutrition and wellness, 3) Dr. David Perera - fellow in gender and sexuality studies - gender diversity and inclusivity in the voice studio

-The chapter also held their annual Canadian art song showcase. All pieces were composed by U of T student composer songs this year, forging connections between departments. Chad suggested making an anthology of the songs from their Canadian art song showcase.

-Finally, the chapter launched a Spotlight on BIPOC repertoire on social media.

-Katy wrapped up by thanking Professor Lorna MacDonald (chapter faculty advisor) and the U of T SNATS executive.

### 7.6.2 UWO – Lucia Santilly

-Lucia expressed her thanks for having SNATS Western at the AGM.

-SNATS Western had a very exciting year. A brand new executive had to build, and this had to be accomplished online. The year began with elections to create the executive. The hope had been for a 3-person executive, but 7 highly qualified people came forward.

-The chapter recruited/raised awareness by starting an Instagram account. Nearly 100 people had joined by the time of this AGM.

-Some of their programs/activities were held on Instagram. These included Week 1) Singing in a genre not comfortable with, Week 2) Trying a new practise routine, Week 3) Singing in front of an audience - one’s own bubble or online. These videos were put into a raffle with the winner receiving a \$25 Amazon gift card.

-Speaker series - 1) Bethany Horst, Chad Louwense, and Rachel Schwartz - How to balance studio teaching, performing, and family; 2) Michelyn Wright - Managing an online studio; 3) Opera In Reach - Minorities in music series/inclusivity in the opera world; 4) John Corry, RMT - Treating your own tongue root tension

-Other highlights included: A collaboration with Laurier for a Sound of

Music singalong, A 12 days of Christmas sing along with faculty of music text alterations, Sunday night study sessions with SNATS on Zoom, and Jury diaries Zoom

#### 7.6.3 WLU – Sarah Stapleton

-Sarah expressed her thanks for having WLU SNATS at the AGM.

-Fully committed to running virtually this year, for the accessibility of their members.

-As WLU is a small school, the executive is small. Like Western, they began the year with recruitment, and focusing on building a strong team.

-A focus in this difficult year was to maintain spirit, energy, and community, togetherness, and inclusivity of the chapter while isolated.

-A highlight was WLU SNATS' annual Sound of Music singalong - founded in the first year of Sarah's presidency. In the past it was held at the Kitchener Public Library, but the chapter was determined to keep it going online. The executive invited Western SNATS members and some faculty to join in. Sarah learned from the ground up how to video edit. The video is still available on the chapter's facebook page. It is being used as a fundraiser for the NATS scholarship fund (which is a silver lining to the online format).

-The chapter also held a range of online events, including Annual Voice Studio Panel regarding how to establish a studio, and the speakers' experiences with marketing, accounting, etc.

-Sarah shared that she is the outgoing president, and that many executive members are graduating. She welcomed Vanessa Hoffmann as the new WLU SNATS president, and a full new executive of 7-8 members.

-Sarah wrapped by expressing how proud she is of the collaboration between WLU and Western this year.

-Linda Condy moved to accept the officer reports (except treasurer's which must be submitted for internal audit for 2021).

-Michelyn Wright seconded.

-Motion carried.

-Joan Heels moved to extend the meeting as long as necessary.

-Lisa Brillon seconded.

-Motion carried.

## 8. Business

### 8.1 Motion to accept reimbursement for Emeritus Members' Chapter membership fees

-NATS waives dues for emeritus members, and NATS Ontario does this as

well. However, members are not listed in our chapter membership unless chapter dues are paid.

-Gloria Gassi moved that, in order for emeritus members to be listed in our chapter directory, we accept their payment of chapter dues, and reimburse them for the same amount.

-Colleen Morrison seconded.

-Motion carried.

-As this is a clunky mechanism, Allen Henderson will look into this procedure.

-Mei Lee will call Judith LeBane Kane to facilitate the payment of her dues.

## 8.2 Motion to increase Vocal Showcase and PD Day Fees for Non-NATS Ontario members

-Lisa Brillon presented on this motion. Our events are available to non-members, as a charitable organization, and these are a great recruitment opportunity, but only function as such if non-members are required to pay more than members.

-Lisa moved to divide 8.2 into two parts.

-Joan Heels seconded.

-Motion carried.

-Lisa moved that there be a \$50.00 surcharge for non-NATS Ontario Chapter members when entering students in the Vocal Showcase. This surcharge may be applied towards a full NATS membership to be used within 12 months.

-Joan Heels seconded.

-Motion carried.

-Lisa moved that there be an additional 30% surcharge to the May Professional Development Day registration fee for non-NATS Ontario Chapter members and a 10% surcharge for non-SNATS members.

-Renee Salewski seconded.

-Motion carried.

(A small number of members question the wisdom of this, as it can limit access to professional development for potential stakeholders. This will be further discussed at the next executive meeting.)

## 8.3 NATS Ontario Policy and Procedure Manual

- Prepared by Lisa Cosens Brillon, Irene Ilic, and Joan Heels
- Approved by the Executive

-Mei announced this initiative, for the purpose of good governance.

-Lisa presented, expressing that the executive believes as a whole that it is

imperative to have these policies in place that apply and relate specifically to our chapter. The manual states our chapter's mission, values, objectives, the board of directors operating structure complete with job descriptions, classes of membership, administrative, human resource, harassment and discrimination policies as well as information and financial policies.

-The P & P Manual has been approved by the executive of the NATS Ontario chapter and they have agreed to the responsibilities of their roles. This manual will be updated yearly and serves as a commitment to strengthen our organizational planning and management to better serve you, our members.

#### 8.4 Executive Members:

##### 8.4.1 Resignations (with appreciation):

- Adam White – Music Theatre Academic Liaison
- Dr. Andrew Rethazi – Treasurer
- Dr. Dann Mitton – Vice President

-Mei expressed her thanks to these outgoing executive members for their service.

##### 8.4.2 Motion to formalize newly established Executive Roles: Gloria Gassi

- Classroom Music Teachers Liaison
- Marketing and Communications

-Gloria Gassi moved.

-Shannon Coates seconded.

-Motion carried.

##### 8.4.3 Nominating Committee Appointments: Gloria Gassi

- Amanda Brunk – Vice President
- Mike Fan – Treasurer (incoming)
- Abigail Freeman – Marketing and Communications
- Amanda Kind – Marketing and Communications (incoming)
- Colleen Morrison – Special Events and Projects Associate
- Nicky McGrath – Special Events and Projects Associate
- Darnell Thomas – Music Theatre Academic Liaison
- Suzanne Schaafsma – Independent Studio Teacher Liaison
- Elspeth Maynard – Classroom Music Teachers Liaison

#### 8.5 Recruitment

- Bylaws Revision Committee

-Mei commented on the necessity to review our bylaws, particularly as the executive has grown and responsibilities have been redistributed. As such, an ad hoc committee is being formed, and Linda Condry - long-time member, and former treasurer and district governor - has been appointed to chair this committee.

-We are looking for three volunteers for the committee. Please contact Linda or

Mei if you are interested.

-Linda said a few words, including that the bylaws were last revised in 2014, making this overdue. She is pleased to be able to contribute.

#### 9. Adjournment

-Joan Heels moved to adjourn.

-Irene Ilic seconded.