

Conservatorium High School P&C Association draft minutes of General Meeting,
held 16 June 2015, 6.40pm in Room 2033

Chair: George Fong

1. Present

Robert Curry, Sassy Park, Thurza Getzler, Billy Shi, Mary Loxley, Eileen Leather, Cherry Dutton, Russell Little, Ian Barker, Bridget Quirk, Chris Batt, Cameron Nolte, Val Simkins, Julie Cartlidge, Binny Harris, Linda Cumines

2. Apologies

Jo Blagg, Rachael Tsang, Judy Powell-Thomas, John Clark, Bronwen Reid, Rudy Adlmayer, Sally Taylor

3. Confirmation of minutes of General Meeting 31 March 2015

Minutes of previous General Meeting confirmed:

Moved by BQ

Confirmed by VS

4. Principal's Report

4.1 Yamaha Disklavier

The concert grand Yamaha Disklavier has arrived. It was heart-warming to see the enthusiastic response of students to demonstrations of its features. The Disklavier's recording function enabled instant play back, with incredibly fine fidelity and the keys dancing. It is hoped to make connections with international schools through the technology, and to reach out to regional schools as well. The Disklavier should work to the advantage of most students. There is a tremendous amount of software on the Yamaha site. Students can listen to an orchestral part and play along with it. Headphones also enable uninterrupted practice with remarkable sound quality.

4.2 Centenary Celebrations

The lunchtime centenary concert was a marvellous event. His Excellency the NSW Governor made a very moving address and all feedback has been very positive.

4.3 Striking a balance between music and study

The Centenary and various other school concerts do take up a certain amount of student time, however the school attempts to ensure that the focus of students is resolutely on their studies. Care is taken to detail in schedules all assessments and concert schedules, so that students may work out the best way to space commitments. Feedback is being sought from current year 12 students about the question of striking the right balance between music and study commitments. IB noted that the Bernstein Mass was an example of attempting to balance commitments – Year 12's were given the option not to be involved in that performance. Three students took up the option. The other students managed not to miss classes.

4.4 Governance issues

RC discussed the difficulties in governance resulting from a lack of clarity about ownership of the Conservatorium. RC explained that the NSW Crown Solicitor's office has indicated previously that the Conservatorium was not gifted to the University, but is owned by the state. The DET has said that evidence of legal ownership can be viewed at DET offices, but has not responded to requests for copies of this evidence. The University appears to govern

on the erroneous assumption that it controls the Conservatorium. RC details examples of how this situation often impacts upon the High School adversely, including restricted access to offices, equipment and classrooms. The Conservatorium High school does not have access to an adequate number of practice studios. There are only 6 studios for 150 students. 24 practice studios previously allocated to the High School have been turned into University studios without Conservatorium High School approval. Composition classes must take place in practice studios, reducing even further the rooms available to students. The locking devices to the school are controlled by the University, leading to practical frustrations and restrictions on facilities. There have been difficulties accessing instruments. In addition, the High School is required to provide 2 office staff and 1 teacher librarian, however decisions about the library are made by the University without consultation. Many hours are spent in meetings, in particular by IB, attempting to resolve governance issues.

GF noted that these issues required further discussion and review.

4.3 HSC written examinations venue

St Andrew's Cathedral School has agreed to provide facilities this year.

4.4 Chris Whiting resignation

Chris Whiting has resigned after long and faithful service to the school. Julie Simonds has assumed all of Chris's responsibilities.

4.5 Applications

There have been a record number of applications this year – 300 plus. JS had suggested that the application form should be on the web site, and she has been a driving force in freshening up the site. The school's excellent HSC results seem to be a significant factor in the increase in applications.

5. Treasurer's Report

5.1 Canteen

CN reported that since SP's last report, \$2290 has been made from the canteen (over 8 weeks).

5.2 Banking and accounts

The current bank balance is \$99,914.60. An invoice has been received from JB [?] and one from VS in relation to the soloist concerts.

Other issues addressed in 7.2 and 7.3.

6. Business Arising

6.1 Café/Canteen report

The BBQ is running smoothly from the school's perspective. The volunteering system is working reasonably well. However, from Dan's viewpoint the takings are not always consistent. The AMEB weekends fluctuate with candidate numbers and the BBQs are often adversely impacted by the weather. The BBQ needs to be outside to attract passing traffic – takings were greatly reduced when set up inside. Dan has proposed the use of a marquee tent, branded Conservatorium High School P&C. It was noted that the BBQ needs to be managed carefully and kept at an appropriate distance from walls, so that fat spray does not damage surfaces. CB recommended the use of a tarpaulin under the BBQ.

The school canteen is functioning well and the students are positive about the food. LC and BQ have good working relationships with Dan. LC speaks to Dan once or twice a week, and

provides input from a Dietitian's perspective. The venture has improved the service of food at the school, providing nourishing options for both students and staff. The P&C is making more money from the arrangement, without the need to provide volunteers during the school week.

6.2 Centenary report

The Database needs to be fully implemented. The old logo may be worked into the new logo, using artwork produced by the year 9 art class in a Photoshop project.

The word "Centenary" has been much used in the context of the University celebrations, which might cloud the message for the Con High celebrations to come. An alternative wording might be "100 years of class – a small school with a big voice."

TG is stepping down as co-ordinator, due to family health issues. RC expressed gratitude for the many hours and enthusiasm that TG has put into the project. GF and VS thanked TG for her dedication and hard work.

Consideration to be given to appointment of new co-ordinator.

6.3 IT Report

Nothing to report.

6.4 Soloist concert report

The concert series is going very well. VS suggested that the system be modified so that forms and music are handed in at the same time – so that it is not necessary to chase music.

6.5 Buzz book report

Nothing to report.

7. New Business

7.1 Recording Studio/instruments update

IB reported that two orders had been made for equipment, totalling \$7,100. IB is further investigating infrastructure before ordering a mixing desk. The equipment ordered should have a long life-span and includes cables, microphones and speakers.

CB proposes a motion for the P&C to pay an extra \$1,100 (in addition to the \$6,000 previously approved).

VS seconds the motion.

IB to provide invoice for recording equipment ordered to P&C Treasurer for payment.

IB noted that there are difficulties accessing the University's harps. He would like to investigate buying a school harp, and is looking at a small Irish Folk Harp. He needs to confirm it is in good working order. It would be a great introduction for students to the harp, and could be used in folk and renaissance music. Second hand percussion instruments have been offered by the University, including a glockenspiel, xylophone, vibes, timpani and tubular bells. IB is keen to take delivery of these instruments once storage is arranged. As part of developing the school's percussion, IB would like to look into obtaining a concert marimba.

IB to evaluate the purchase of a concert marimba.

Piccolo invoice to be presented to the P&C.

TG noted that there is sometimes confusion about the responsibilities and procedures for maintenance of instruments. IB explained that the school maintains its instruments every

year. If an instrument is borrowed for more than a year, the school will service it before it goes out, and the family are required to service it before it is returned. There have been difficulties borrowing University instruments. IB is looking into whether the school can purchase certain instruments no longer needed by the University.

7.2 EFTPOS machine/other alternative payment options

CN and SP have examined the merits of alternative payment options. It is difficult to compare interest rate schemes between cards. Some employ standard scales of interest rates, others involve different classes of cards linked to loyalty programs, etc. There has not been a sufficient volume of transactions through credit card machines this year to enable a full assessment of the options.

Issue to be re-examined when there is a more complete picture of likely transactions over the course of a year.

VS noted that online registration for P&C could provide payment gateway opportunities (e.g., FlexiSchools).

7.3 Potential movement of investment account to higher interest bearing product

CN investment account was earning 1% interest. \$70,000 has been moved to term deposit at 2.4%, maturing on 12th December 2015. An on-line saver account has been opened at 1.4% at call, with a 1.6% deal for the first 3 months. The V2 account has been closed.

CN proposes a motion to transfer \$19,000 to online saver account, less the amount to be invoiced for the piccolo, and the \$1,000 for sound recording equipment.

GF seconded the motion.

7.4 Physiocise

TG reported that Cynthia Talone was very enthusiastic about the program. One and a half hr sessions can be held during Wednesday sport for each year group. Rachel Trevillion (Physiocise) usually charges \$300 per hr, but can discount for booking seven sessions – the quote is \$1,850, which includes pre-program surveys of students, meetings with staff to tailor the program, 7x90 min sessions and a booklet for each student summarising concepts and exercises. It was suggested that year 12s organise a time that suited them, if at all within study constraints (with potential adjustment of price if the year 12 session does not take place).

TG to renegotiate the price where adjustment required for absence of year 12 class

TG moves a motion for the expenditure \$1,850 plus GST for the program.

EL seconded the motion.

7.5 House Concert DVD

IB noted the plans to hold a movie night to view the 2014 house concert DVD, to be held soon so that the year 12s may benefit.

7.6 Executive Committee Expenses

There was some discussion about the need to tighten up the mechanism, documentation and approval process for any reimbursement of Executive Committee expenses, in the interests of transparency and best practice.

GF requested that guidelines be brainstormed by members outside the Executive Committee before the next General meeting - to be confirmed at that meeting if possible.

8. New Business

8.1 Richard Mew's thank you party

LC suggested that RM be given a present for all his efforts over the years, on behalf of past and current members.

LC proposes a motion that Richard Mews be given a \$300 voucher.

SP seconds the motion.

LC to prepare gift to be presented on 23 July at the 'Thank you to Mr Mew' party.

8.2 Furniture and proposed upgrade of Canteen area

SP and LC have been looking into replacing the 'Coke stools' with IKEA stools and reconfigurable tables. LC suggested parents might be encouraged to come in for year group lunches. SP has asked about the cleaning of light fittings and is looking into posters to smarten up the area.

SP proposed a motion to purchase \$2000 worth of IKEA furniture for the canteen area.

JC seconds the motion.

BQ to work further with Dan in investigating suitable outdoor shelter for the BBQ – perhaps a pop-up gazebo.

8.3 Orientation day catering

GF reported that all the food disappeared very quickly last year. There needs to be a greater quantity of food this year, with about 100 people expected (students and families). The House Concert is on the same day. There will be a separate day for paperwork and pre-testing involving new students only.

8.4 House concert Ice-cream cart

VS has arranged this.

8.5 Chris Whiting thank you

GF proposes a motion that CW be given a \$150 book voucher.

VS seconds the motion.

LC will arrange for this gift to be sent to CW.

8.6 Auditor tickets

SP has offered the auditor two tickets to the house concerts.

8.7 Work experience request

Richard Fowler has requested that parents be asked for suggestions for work experience placements for year 9 and 10s. Any suggestions to be emailed to RF or IB.

8.8 Level exams

Level exams follow a different format this year. There is to be one exam only at the end of year, dealing with technical and repertoire together. Tutors will be consulted in assessing the appropriate level of each candidate. The exams will follow as similar format to the tertiary exams, and might flow on to BMus1 exams in years 11 and 12, earning the student credit points for University.

9. Correspondence

None to report.

Next Meeting: 18 August 2015, 6.30pm

Meeting closed at 9.20pm