

Saratoga Music Boosters (SMB)

A 501(c)(3) organization supporting music programs in the Saratoga Union School District and Saratoga High School

Regular Meeting over Zoom, January 11th, 2022: **Minutes**

Attendance: total number of attendees = 20, including the following:

Executive Board

Dave Holt - President
Alicia de Fuentes - Recording Secretary
Isabelle Gecils - Parliamentarian
Vidya Vineet - VP Donations
Tim Tang - Accounts Receivable/Treasurer
Richard Aochi - Controller/Treasurer
Revathi Koteeswaran - Treasurer

Music Directors

Isabel McPherson
Jon Jow
Jason Shiuan
Michael Boitz
Beth Nitzan

Booster Members

Andrew Dimock
Sameer Vaidya
Rahul Agarwal
Rashi Sanghi
Luna den Hartog
Olivia Zhou

Dave Holt calls the meeting to order at 7:32 pm.

Approval of December Minutes presented by Alicia de Fuentes

After no comments or suggestions to edit the minutes were made, Revathi Koteeswaran moved to approve minutes as presented and Michael Boitz second.

Motion carried unanimously.

Andrew Dimock

Dave Holt thanks Andy for his years of support to SMB as an executive board member and explains to the community that Mr. Dimock may no longer serve on the board as he is now a Saratoga High faculty, SMB by-laws do not allow faculty to serve as executive board members. Dave Holt congratulates Andrew for his new role.

December Financials

Revathi Koteeswaran presents an overview of December financial balances for Saratoga High School (SHS), Redwood Middle School (RMS), SUSD Elementary schools:

Compares Actuals against Planned Budget

SHS 2021-22 Actuals \$298,910 vs Planned Budget \$209,874

RMS 2021-22 Actual Income \$33,928 vs Planned Budget Income \$115,250

Elementary 2021-22 Actual Income \$4,150 vs Planned Budget Income \$18,500

SMB Unrestricted Funds Actual Income \$166,302 vs Planned Budget Income \$134,255

Grand totals 2021-22 Actual Income \$1,016,645 vs Planned Budget Income \$992,725

The grand total expense of \$734,089 is reflecting the money that will go toward the 2022 July European tour.

Alicia de Fuentes moves to approve December financials as presented.

Tim Tang seconds

Voting to approve financials carried unanimously.

Approval of Comerica Checks

Revathi Koteeswaran requests approval of Comerica check numbers from 15007 to 15012 as amended.

Alicia de Fuentes moves to approve listed checks and Richard Aochi seconds.

Voting to approve checks carried unanimously.

Budgets for Winter Guard and Winter Percussion

Revathi Koteeswaran highlights with blue the budget being tracked for Winter Guard and Winter Percussion and seeks approval for their respective budget:

Winter Guard's Budget is \$16,800

Winter Percussion is \$45,120

These amounts cover trip expenses such as uniforms, transportation, competition fees etc.

In the case of Winter Guard there is an allocated program grant of \$6,800 and a fundraising goal of \$5,870 to assist in covering its budget.

For Winter Percussion there is an allocated program grant of \$9,750 and a fundraising goal of \$10,000.

Revathi Koteeswaran continues by saying these numbers are similar to previous years and that program grants come out of program funds, and fortunately in SMB financials there is a budget income of \$134,255 in the benefactor account that can be used to supplement and cover expenses if direct program donations come up short. So SMB is grateful for benefactor donations that allow freedoms to allocate money to ensure program success as needed and these donations do help the overall SMB community.

Dave Holt states that the program grants are common practice and aligns with previous years funding of programs. He understands that the kids in the mentioned programs are to raise funds.

Andrew Dimock asks if \$10,000 is not an overly ambitious goal to raise.

Jason Shiuan clarifies that he would like these kids to take ownership of their programs by working to raise funds themselves. He is looking into fundraising opportunities with Sean Clark that draw interest from the community and is relatively easy to set up such as boba sales and performances etc.

Isabelle Gecils wants to know how many people are attending and inquires about the number of different hotel and flight bookings.

Jason Shiuan indicates that this year they had more people interested in Winter Percussion than previous years so their original flight and hotel bookings were not enough resulting in the need to undergo another round of flight and hotel bookings to cover the increase. So, currently there are a total of 70 individuals consisting of students, staff and chaperones.

Alicia de Fuentes requests if these documents presented on screen can be sent as attachments for documentation purposes.

Revathi Koteeswaran states she will send the financials with check amendment and presented budget.

Dave Holt clarifies that the presented totals are in the financials.

Rahul Agarwal inquires if there is any plan to cover CODA (California Orchestra Directors Associations) students.

Jason Shiuan states yes and needs to further discuss this.

Dave Holt asks if anyone would like to move to approve the budget as presented.

Andrew Dimock moves to approve the budget as presented.

Tim Tang seconds.

Dave Holt inquires if there is a need for further discussion, there is silence prompting Dave to request a show of hands to approve the motions and it is noted that all motions were approved unanimously.

Comparison of Budgets from Past Years to Date

Dave Holt presents a comparison of past budget reports to date to understand how SMB is positioned with a historical perspective and how to improve it. After noticing a decline in donations received from middle and elementary schools, Dave Holt asks Isabel McPherson and Jon Jow about their thoughts on the programs offered in elementary and middle school.

Isabelle Gecils interjects and queries why must program participations be called 'donations' as this may lead people to believe that monetary participation is optional.

Dave Holt reminds all, that payment is voluntary, but there is an ability to encourage a vast majority of parents to participate and benefit from a tax deduction because of the type of organization SMB is. He then returns to the aforementioned question.

Jon Jow shares his frustrations by confirming that program participation are 'donations' with a recent added degree of difficulty to gather them given a recent Saratoga Union School District (SUSD) directive indicating that families may not be directly targeted to remind them that program participation is vital for future access to SMB programs. He and Isabel McPherson have sent out a general solicitation once a month but unfortunately they have not produced the needed response. We may need to cut back on Color Guard and Winter Percussion if we are unable to raise the funds, and inform SUSD these programs are unable to continue because quite simply the funds were not raised.

Dave Holt suggests using our SMB volunteers to take charge and lobby and remind the parents how important it is to continue to fund these programs through donations.

Isabel McPherson says she will send out an email with numbers indicating what it costs to offer a clinic and bring professionals to run them, suggesting this may help. Also, she informs us that families are not sure if they have donated or not. Sending information back to parents indicating the collection of their donation may also help.

Vidya Vineet indicates that the information is available and believes the sheet is shared with Jon Jow and Isabel McPherson.

Dave Holt confirms with Vidya Vineet that this sheet has been created.

Michael Boitz suggests sending a blanket email that includes everyone who has not fully contributed emphasizing not to send it to families who have contributed. From experience he has found that calling parents directly also helps.

Dave Holt suggests starting with a blanket email given there are too many numbers in red in middle school, then more specific approaches will be implemented down the road.

Isabelle Gecils, on a personal note indicates, that direct emails have more of an effect for her as she too has forgotten whether she has donated and she tends to filter out generic emails.

Rashi Sanghi indicates as a parent she does not know where the dollars are going. So she fully supports Isabel McPerson's idea to attach numbers to valuable eye catchers such as bringing in clinicians.

Michael Boitz states that it is nice to know what we may miss out on if funds are not raised to cover for them.

Isabelle Gecils understands parents questioning why they should pay for more in school time classes if there is not a need to pay for more in science classes.

Dave Holt recognizes the great discussions and ideas. He summarizes the plan of action by saying a list of people who have not fully contributed to the program will be created and they will be informed of their standing. This is the first pass, then there will be follow up calls made by SMB volunteers.

Jon Jow clarifies that donation requests have been sent out for all running programs.

Alicia de Fuentes indicates that she did not receive the request for program donation form related to Saratoga High School Winter Percussion, nor did she receive the email containing the slides relating to the upcoming trip presented during parent information night and asks if the trip will coincide with school time.

Jason Shiuan says that the kids will miss a few days of school but all teachers do accommodate for this. Then he states that he will see whether Alicia de Fuentes is missing from the email chain.

Refreshing our Five Year Vision

Dave Holt proposes SMB's vision be refreshed, requests our music directors to sell their programs to the community by saying things like: the kids get to go to competitions, attend clinics, etc. Hopes this will keep enrollment up for next year and marks the need to reinforce the importance of making donations.

Michael Boitz adds he thinks it is a great idea, as well as sharing the wealth the Music Boosters program has to offer by communicating them to younger kids and their parents. In addition, he is happy to clearly communicate the money side.

Dave Holt says he can cover the money side he just needs all directors to sell the program vision, then he explains how his daughter was able to do things in Redwood Middle School that are treasured life experiences.

Jon Jow is in total agreement and explains it is hard to communicate to parents the richness of the programs unless there is a K thru 12 presentation to create a unique understanding of the music program. Hosting a large event that covers all angles will help achieve a global understanding.

Isabel McPherson also believes the idea to be great and remembers from her own experience watching the high schoolers play and feeling the excitement to sign up too. She also alerts her fears of Redwood Middle School moving the elective selection dates earlier each year because kids will need to decide on taking electives before even having fully experienced them yet, for example, some kids have orchestra coming up on the wheel but their experience will be insignificant to even determine whether they like it or not.

Dave Holt recognizes that to be a depressing fact.

Beth Nitzan believes the longitudinal look of SMB to be a great idea and she can help with that.

Dave Holt finalizes this topic of discussion by saying he will work with all the directors and see how to orchestrate it all.

Directors' Report

Jason Shiuan apologizes for not attending the last board meeting and shares the following:

After an extremely competitive audition process with a larger than normal pool of participants, the following students from Band and Orchestra have been accepted into the California All-State Honor Ensembles. These students represent the best of the best high school musicians that California has to offer. Congrats to Maithreyi B. (10, viola), Ayushi C. (12, alto), Ethan C. (12, violin), Channie H. (11, cello), Samuel J. (11, cello), David K. (9, viola), Ian K. (9, string bass), Joel K. (11, cello), Nathan K. (12, string bass), Marcus K. (12, violin), Caden L. (11, alto sax), Dyne L. (11, clarinet), Nathan L. (9, trumpet), Ryan L. (12, percussion) Jaehyun L. (10, clarinet), Isaac L. (11, bass clarinet), Nishant N. (10, tenor), Alison O. (11, trumpet), Christopher O. (12, euphonium), Carolyn P. (11, violin), Tarun R. (9, tenor), Vidur S. (10, alto sax), Yoshiki S. (12, trumpet), Matthew S. (11, viola), Tejas T. (10, viola), Anthony W. (11, clarinet), Simon Y. (11, percussion).

Additionally, the following students were also selected to the 70th Santa Clara County Honor Band. With 22 students from Saratoga accepted, they represent 25% of the entire ensemble - the most from any school in the county. Congratulations to Jayden H. (9, clarinet), Tristan H. (10, tuba), Helen K. (11, flute), Kian K. (12, horn), Caden L. (11, alto sax), Dyne L. (11, clarinet), Nathan L. (9, trumpet), Ryan L. (12, percussion), Isaac L. (11, bass clarinet), Jacob M. (11,

bassoon), Eric M. (11, flute), Alison O. (11, trumpet), Christopher O. (12, euphonium), Raghav R. (10, horn), Vidur S. (10, alto sax), Danny S. (9, trombone), Pothan T. (10, trumpet), Petr T. (11, flute), Anthony W. (11, clarinet), Simon Y. (11, percussion), Stanley Y. (11, bari sax), Nathan Z. (11, clarinet).

Finally, Petr T. (11) has been selected as one of the assistant drum majors of the world-renowned Blue Devils B Corps. To be selected as a drum major for BDB requires great tenacity, dedication, passion, and work ethic - without a doubt, Petr boldly embodies these attributes day in and day out. He is only the 2nd student from Saratoga HS to ever be selected as a drum major for the Blue Devils.

Dave Holt acknowledges the kids are incredible.

Michael Boitz shares the joy of seeing a beautiful display of music memories in the music building. Thanks to parents like Mrs Gecils, wonderful moments were photographically captured from years past to present.

He then thanks band and orchestra liaisons for all their work, he states they are awesome, super easy to work with and pizza will turn up and he does not even know who ordered it. He furthers his comment by saying if one needs to find the best parents then look to the marching band parents.

He also echoes Jason Shiuian's observation that all concerts and competitions were well attended, audience size was bigger than ever and these indicators lead him to believe music will experience a renaissance.

He shares that the seniors are giving him a run for his money during the December break, he does not ever recall saying no to a recommendation letter. He was working on a letter for a senior who he has seen start in orchestra and band and states that it is awesome to see them grow.

He observes that a lot of kids are doing great work as mentioned above by Jason Shiuian and have been spotlighted in Principal Louie's Friday Letter.

He closes by saying the first semester was a really nice one after dealing with the hump of recent times.

Isabel McPherson shares that 5 orchestra students were accepted into All-State and that 4 out of the 5 were 7th graders. She is glad to have kids playing at that level as it helps to keep positive.

She expects the instruments for string orchestra should arrive at any moment and is looking forward to 'Introducing Strings'.

She comments that she was out for a few days and is extra grateful to Jason Jow for covering for her.

Jon Jow highlights the most important thing is 01/12/2022 is Isabel McPherson's birthday. Then he continues with the following:

The return-to-school has been full of pivoting and ever changing updates almost everyday. While we're waiting to see how long the current COVID surge lasts and guide our district in updating their policies and protocols, we're hopeful that the progression of the semester will bring continued easing of restrictions and more opportunities for performance.

Four of our band students were accepted into the California All-State Jr. High Honor Band. Competition seems to have been tough this year and we are proud of those who were noticed by the blind audition panel. We congratulate and applaud all of our students who sent in auditions and prepared auditions! He acknowledges that going through the audition process itself is a sign of success.

Appreciation to all of our music staff and SMB volunteers for your continued support throughout this year. This has been incredibly challenging, and your advocacy and support has kept us going and uplifted. Thank you!

Beth Nitzan had 3 students accepted to all-state, 1 senior, 1 sophomore and a freshman and is excited to travel with them to Fresno.

She states that the Choir is starting to gel.

She also reminds all that the Valentine gram is coming up soon and says they will include strings instrument students as well, as it would be nice to get combinations with Choir and instrumentals, to have a different ensemble to what the kids are used to.

Closing Remarks

Dave Holt says that one of their points in scouts is bravery, and declares the teachers to be very brave.

Sameer Vaidya asks about the status of the pancake breakfast.

Dave Holt says there will soon be a meeting with Principal Louie to road map out the event. Everybody wants it and will try to make it happen.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:47pm

Summary of Motions

Approval of December Minutes

Revathi Koteeswaran moves, Michael Boitz seconds: motion carries

Approval of December Financials as presented

Alicia de Fuentes moves, Tim Tang seconds: motion carries

Approval of Comerica checks as amended

Alicia de Fuentes moves, Richard Aochi seconds: motion carries

Approval of Budget for Winter Guard and Winter Percussion as presented

Andrew Dimock moves, Tim Tang seconds: motion carries

Respectfully submitted,

Alicia de Fuentes

Recording Secretary