

**FAI Board of Directors Meeting
April 24, 2017**

In attendance:

Matt Smith (President)
Lisa Schwartz (Vice President)
Deana McCloud (Secretary)
Alka Sharma (Treasurer)
Matt Sever (Member at large)

Lynn Cingari
Michelle Conceison
lou DeMarco
Dom Flemons
Joan Kornblith
Michael Kornfeld

Cheptoo Kositany-Buckner
Ralph Jaccodine
Sam Lee
Ellen Stanley
Mary Sue Twohy
Erika Wollam-Nichols

Aengus Finnan, Executive Director

Regrets: Donald Davidoff
Tim McFadden
Amy Reitnouer

Call to Order/Procedure Reminder

The meeting was called to order by President Matt Smith at 11:08 AM CT. Matt reminded board members of the confidentiality of the meeting as well as the procedure placement on the list to speak. A new process for viewing the board kit has been implemented, and Matt thanked the board for its patience as we work through the initial implementation. Members who had not previously gained access to the kit were added to the shared folder. All reports and the board kit will be shared on Google Drive within these shared folders. Committee reports will need to be sent to Jenny or Deana for uploading in a timely manner so that board members can review in advance of future meetings. Directors have “read only” access to the files.

Review/Approval of Minutes

The minutes from February board meeting as well as ExCom minutes from March 7 and April 18 were reviewed and the floor was open for discussion. There was a discussion about the ExCom minutes regarding the potential of using Skype for those who are unable to attend the face-to-face meeting. Aengus noted that as board expands, an alternative for being involved in the discussion may be needed when members have other commitments under exceptional circumstances, especially when this absence is due to another FAI event scheduled at the same time. Matt added that this is not a replacement for attendance requirements, and will be recorded as a missed meeting when it occurs. There were also concerns voiced about Skype being disruptive to discussions being held in the room. Matt noted that there will be a continuation of the discussion regarding how to implement technology for those unable to be at the meeting in person, but noted that it would be as a way of being in tune rather than participation in the discussion to reduce communication disruptions.

Motion: To accept Board Meeting minutes from February 15 and 16, 2017 and ExCom Meeting minutes from March 7, 2017 and April 18, 2017.

Moved by: Mary Sue Twohy

Seconded: Michael Kornfeld

Result: Motion carried with 3 members abstaining

Executive Director's Report

Conference Recap

Aengus provided the board with the post conference report that was sent to members, attendees, and past attendees. <http://bit.ly/2pqNzSO>

This report highlights and celebrates the exceptional event held in 2017, and Aengus expressed thanks to the board for their support. It was mentioned that there had been wonderful feedback from all involved.

The 2017 conference data indicates total attendance of 2694, a 23% increase in attendees compared to 2016, which was also an exceptional increase from previous years. There was also an increase of 67 additional presenters for a total of 406, and 27 countries were represented this year, a significant increase from 2016 when there were 17.

In addition, 1009 first time attendees registered for the conference this year. The incentive of a rebate for bringing in new attendees was successful in helping to increase the numbers of new attendees. Aengus also shared the success of the Green Folk program and the reduced environmental impact of the event this year.

A more in-depth post conference survey will be provided to the board prior to the Malibu meeting in May. There were over 700 responses to this year's survey, which is double the number received in the past, making it a longer process for separating data and preparing a more detailed report.

Membership

Based on membership data, there was a decrease of 72 accounts, mostly in non-voting membership this year. Aengus mentioned this can be attributed to the direct approach to bring in more local volunteers. This provided Kansas City volunteers the opportunity to work without having to purchase memberships in exchange for longer hours.

Comparative Registrant Data

A graph of comparative industry delegates and breakdown of international attendees shows the growth from 2016 to 2017. Of note is the isolation of four new industry sub-categories:

- Government Agency/Funder
- Music Distribution
- Music Industry Association/Union
- Recording Studio

The comparative hotel booking stats provides information about the growth based on hotel rooms booked for the conference. For 2017, FAI sold out Westin and our block of rooms at the Sheraton.

Development

Aengus provided a development report that provided status for donations, grants, and other various revenue streams. There is a plan in place to bridge gap with donation shortfalls. The goals set last year were quite ambitious, so there are planned modest targets in order to bridge the gaps in funding.

Media

Aengus thanked Joan Kornblith and Mary Sue Twohy for their help with media attendees and developing relationships between Erika Noguera, FAI's publicist Lellie Capwell, and FAI's media contacts. Media coverage in *Billboard* and *Wall Street Journal* was highlighted as a result of those contacts.

2017-2018 Deadlines-At-A-Glance

A document for the layout of deadlines for 2018 was included in the board kit. Aengus pointed out a newly introduced "Members Only" early window in May that is an opportunity for purchasing a special advance Early Bird discount. This special advance rate is \$30 off the early bird rate and is intended to drive membership renewal as well as allowing better ability to plan panels and events in advance.

2018 Sales Information

The collateral for sponsorships and sales for 2018 was provided to the board. Mentioned in this material and brought to the attention of the Board included information for the 30th anniversary Wednesday night awards program, which will be held at the Folly Theater. Shuttles between the hotel and the theater will be provided for this event.

Other Updates

Aengus is back in the US after having his new O-1 Visa approved for the next 3-year contract. Prior to his return he attended networking events in Estonia and Scotland. Erika Noguera and Alex have both have been traveling as well in order to network with industry contacts and board members in Nashville and Toronto respectively.

On April 13 Aengus met in Nashville with the leaders of FAI partner organizations: Paul from IBMA, Barbara from The Blues Foundation, and Jed from Americana. This Executive Directors' Retreat was initiated by FAI. During these meetings, there was a collective sense of excitement for collaborating. This meeting was a healthy relationship-building exercise and was a nice sign for the organizations moving forward. The consensus was that it would be a positive meeting to hold annually.

Matt Smith called for questions from the board in response to the Executive Director's report. Michelle Conceison posed a question regarding membership goals. Based on decrease in memberships, should we set goals to increase memberships, and what is the role of the board for helping to establish those goals? Aengus noted that the decrease is indicative of a shift from membership only providing discounts to the conference. Jerrod is looking more strategically at the value of the FAI membership message and running reports on expired organizational memberships. Those membership levels were set on financial thresholds many years ago, so it needs to be evaluated to see if those are still the appropriate financial thresholds for large organizational memberships or if they should change. A change in pricing may play a factor in increased memberships.

Finance Committee Report

Alka Sharma provided the forecasted financials through the end of the year that were tabulated by Aengus and Jen. They will be delivering the first draft of budget to Alka for the next fiscal year in the last week of May. This budget draft will be reviewed by the Finance Committee and then presented to board at the Malibu meeting for review and approval.

Regions Committee Report

Mary Sue Twohy reported that things went very well at regional leaders retreat in Baltimore. The theme of the retreat was the word "alliance," separate entities that work together and support each other. The Retreat Summary report included in the Board kit provides an overview of the meeting and detailed a focus on Executive Committee roles and duties of non-profits.

The Regions Committee met the previous week to discuss and propose goals for the committee and proposals for moving forward. These are to strategically consider the vision of further collaboration between FAI and regions and consider FAI's regional goals and strategies. The Regions Committee requests the Board discuss at the meeting in Malibu how we can better be an alliance with regions while maintaining separate entity status.

Matt Smith stated that the retreat was an inspiring gathering that looked to the future in a positive, collaborative manner.

Fundraising Committee Report

Lou DeMarco has spoken with Donald, Alex, and Aengus, and the committee hopes to share a prototype of collateral and opportunities to engage donors at the Malibu meeting. Based on the success of the KC Friends of Folk, the intention is to continue the same type of opportunity for donating. They are looking at potential cities to host a similar event. Aengus mentioned that FAI can celebrate another one million dollar operational year despite the shortfall in donations and fundraising. This puts us in a much better place for Alex and Aengus to be working with the fundraising committee in order to generate financial support. There will be more tactical and measured asks to individuals and organizations moving forward. The organization's materials are more consistent, and the conversation more signification for 501(c)(3) asks.

Advocacy

Committee chair Ellen Stanley presented details from a discussion within the committee regarding the idea of combining the subcommittees of Visas/Immigration and Air/Travel since there is so much overlap. The board discussion indicated that this was appropriate. Ralph Jaccodine and Ellen will discuss completion of the health paper and next steps. The PRO/Copyright subcommittee led by Matt Sever discussed the follow-up on the PRO survey. The steps for moving forward are:

- Continue pursuing education for artists and venues
- Outlining paperwork for informing membership about survey results
- Get a copy of coffee shop agreement for reference
- Invite a lawyer into the sub-committee (David Hirshland has agreed to help with this)

Membership

Erika Wollam-Nichols reported that the Membership Committee hasn't been particularly active to date, but plans to have a call soon. Michelle as lead of the Research subcommittee is bringing Erika up to speed and sharing information for future planning. A draft was begun for potential research partners. This will be used in order to help enunciate the type of research they would like to do. The subcommittee is thinking through the method of what research could be as well as the purpose and the goals. At this point, discussion is an exploration of ideas, and more will be discussed at the Malibu meeting. Non board members who serve on this subcommittee will sign NDAs (Non Disclosure Agreements).

Other business

Aengus noted that a plan for site locations moving forward with continued conversation about proposed sites. Final RFPs for board approval will be provided at the Malibu meeting so that the board can lay out a plan for the best approach in terms of RFPs for the 2020-2024 U.S. based conferences. These discussions will include determining options of toggling in and out of Kansas City and realistic parameters around that. The two RFPs generated are for multi-year agreements and single year agreements. Assessing all of those options and price points will enable the board to make a more informed decision about future site plans. One of the benefits of having RFPs out is that it keeps Kansas City competitive, particularly in relation to the renewal of the contract with Starwood properties, that has been acquired by Marriott, and VisitKC's consideration of the economic impact on the city.

Plans for 30th anniversary

The agenda items for Malibu include planning for the 30th anniversary in 2018. We are actively soliciting memories, photos, etc. from members and past attendees, which will be compiled into an archive. Aengus said the recent staff retreat was focused on organizational storytelling, which is an exercise that will be brought to the Malibu meeting. Video testimonials will be gathered at each regional gathering and the Malibu conference. Boutique items are being considered to be implemented for the 30th conference. These items may include a CD and coffee table retrospective, among other ideas, taking into consideration the time and resources necessary for researching and compilation.

Next Meeting in Malibu

Matt Smith asked for board members to be considering agenda items. Topics currently listed to be discussed include:

- Corporate storytelling
- Site selection
- 2018 budget
- Donald's finance 101 exercise
- 30th anniversary

Additional items suggested:

- RFP for research
- Fundraising
- Regions question of how to be more of an alliance
- Moving forward process for strategic planning

Aengus noted that a list of key Southern California contacts will be circulated to the board as a googledoc so that the board can note any omissions.

Ellen Stanley moved to adjourn the meeting.

Matt Smith reminded members to update the spreadsheet listing events they will be attending.
https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/15ucnHjCNS9zk6t_Y2xloF8YIdHlnWTShwamK3sOQz-8/edit

There being no other business to address, the meeting adjourned at 12:37 PM CT.