

**FAI AGM
February 14, 2019
Montreal, Canada**

Directors in attendance:

Lynn Cingari	Lisa Schwartz
Lou DeMarco	Matt Sever
Dom Flemons	Alka Sharma
Gil Gastelum	Matt Smith
Chloe Goodyear	Ellen Stanley
Joan Kornblith	Denise Stiff
Michael Kornfeld	Meg Tarquinio
Sara Leishman	Laura Thomas
Gary Paczosa	Gerald Torres
Amy Reitnouer	Reid Wick

Aengus Finnan, Executive Director, Folk Alliance International

Call to Order and Introductions

Outgoing president Matt Smith began the FAI Annual General Meeting at 9:04 AM ET, with a land recognition. After a welcome to all members, Matt introduced the new Executive Committee:

Lisa Schwartz (President)
Matt Sever (Vice President)
Deana McCloud (Secretary)
Alka Sharma (Treasurer)
Ellen Stanley (At-Large)

Newly elected president Lisa Schwartz provided a welcome in English and French and called the meeting to order at 9:07 AM ET. Lisa noted the incredible host facility for the conference and thanked Aengus, Jennifer Roe, and the staff for all the hard work to make the conference transition to a new city possible. She further noted that the meeting was being held in the Joni Mitchell Room and the appropriateness for the gathering in that particular room.

Lisa recognized the FAI founding members in the audience and acknowledged the outgoing Directors, Sam Lee, Mary Sue Twohy, Greg Torrington, and Michelle Conceison, and thanked all for their years of service.

Incoming members—Chloe Goodyear, Sara Leishman, Meg Tarquinio, and Gerald Torres—we welcomed to the FAI Board, and all Directors were introduced. Lisa also welcomed and recognized the Regional leaders and past Directors in attendance and expressed gratitude to the organization’s generous donors and sponsors.

Treasurer’s Report

Treasurer Alka Sharma provided the current financial report to members. She thanked Aengus, Jennifer Roe, and Finance Committee members for their work on the report. The report reflects the organization's strong fiscal status, which was possible by the careful diligence of the Executive Director and through oversight by the Board.

At the end of 2018, FAI had just over \$550,000 in liquid assets, which doesn't include an estimated \$42,000 in accounts receivable and prepaid expenses against other liabilities of just under \$136,000. The audit for the last fiscal year was unqualified with no reservations, and the organization continues to be debt free.

FAI is in a secure financial position as the organization's mission is expanded with outreach and programming as well as preparations for the 2020 conference in New Orleans. Looking toward the rest of 2019, the expectation is that the financial conditions will remain stable, and the Board and staff continues to be focused on the necessity to protect and improve the organization's financial condition.

Executive Director's Report

Annual Report Overview

Aengus provided a review of the past year and a presentation of the Annual Report. The celebration of the 30th year of FAI and the organization's accomplishments resulted in a great deal of growth and elevation of the brand. Aengus noted FAI accomplishments from 2018 that were included in the Annual Report. These included the inaugural GRAMMY week event in New York City and the 2018 International Folk Music Award ceremony that was held in the historic Folly Theater in Kansas City. The ceremony was live streamed for the first time in FAI history.

In tracking the demographics of conference attendees, it was noted that 35 countries were represented at the 2018 event. This was a 6% increase in attendance from 2017.

Aengus was pleased to announce that the ExChange for 2018, held in Gothenburg, is leading to the formation of a Nordic Folk Alliance.

Advocacy partnerships continue to grow as FAI continues to reach out to the larger Arts community. These partnerships with Americans for the Arts and other organizations that petition for and advocate about laws and arts interests increase FAI's visibility and efforts to support artists.

As part of the Keychange initiative, FAI met a 50/50 gender parity in 2017 for official showcase artists. In 2018 this initiative includes a 50/50 gender parity for emcees and all panelists.

FAI has a commitment to continue community training every year in order to promote and support a safe music environment for all.

Aengus further noted that the FAI Finest Folk showcases were presented at AmericanaFest (100% female focused), International Bluegrass Music Association, and SXSW.

FAI Regions are celebrating growth and increased attendance at regional conferences.

The Executive Directors retreat has established more collaboration and supportive partnerships among the organization leaders.

The staff and Aengus are pleased to report that FAI received three nonprofit marketing Philly Awards in Kansas City in 2018.

Aengus thanked the current and recently retired Directors for their collegial work to establish a new Strategic Plan for the organization. Aengus reviewed the updated mission statement and the four vision items from the Strat Plan.

Financials

The Annual Report also included the 2018 total income and expenses as well as a comparison over five years and a dashboard of fundraising growth. The organization continues to grow in membership and conference attendees.

New Office

The new FAI office in Kansas City has a seven-year lease. As part of a special relationship with the developer, FAI will use the office to connect to the community and activate the space.

Staff

Aengus expressed deep thanks to the staff. Nothing would happen without their incredible leadership and efforts. Recognition was given to each staff member as well as the paid interns. Special thanks were given to Beth Hatch as the conference volunteer coordinator. Aengus also recognized Erika Noguera as the retiring Communications Manager and welcomed Kelly Dougherty to the role. Diane Tankle was recognized as a retiring NERFA leader and thanked for her work.

Folk DJ Chart

FAI is announcing today that the ad hoc chart with a volunteer team is transitioning to be under the guidance of FAI. Thanks was given to all involved for keeping that chart alive.

2019 Conference

The theme of the 2019 FAI conference is "Spirit of Creativity." The organization addressed the challenges of moderation and balance with the conference presentations. This year FAI hosted the world's first International Indigenous Music Summit under the leadership of Shoshona Kish. The Artist in Residence program for 2019 is a collaboration between Twin Flames and UNESCO in recognition of this year being the International Year of Indigenous Languages. To celebrate the 50th anniversary of John and Yoko's Bed-In in this hotel, attendees are encouraged to participate in a live stream recreation Saturday morning at 9:30 AM.

The date for the 2020 conference in New Orleans is January 22-26. Aengus presented the 2020 conference video to be used to promote the event and then introduced Michelle Conceison to present information about the FAI research project.

Research Project

Michelle provided an overview of the research goals that will be used as FAI moves forward and sets further strategic goals. The first phase is intended to self-reflect and establish relationships and

processes for further study. This is not intended to define what “folk” is, but to explore who the organization is. The partner reflection process led to work with Slover Linett based on their past experiences working with Arts organizations.

The goals for Step One in the process was to obtain in-depth qualitative interviews; Step Two was an online quantitative survey. The survey received over 2000 responses. A report and executive summary will be issued in March. Michelle provided a brief summary of those results.

Michelle further noted that more work will reveal additional data for further understanding and to help guide the organization moving forward. This will be particularly helpful in understanding audiences and the financial aspect of the industry. The next steps will look at diversity, audience, and economics. FAI will consider the current Strategic Plan to prioritize the next area of study, design next steps, and identify and pursue funding sources and partnerships. Michelle thanked the committee, Aengus, and the Board for the support for this project.

Other Business

Lisa thanked all in attendance for their time and attention and asked if there were any questions from delegates. No questions were posed at this time.

Motion: To adjourn meeting
Made by: Dave Humphreys

With all business being concluded, this AGM for Folk Alliance International was adjourned at 10:04 AM ET.