

# OCFF 2008 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Sunday, 26 October 2008  
Delta Hotel, Ottawa, Ontario  
Start time: 12:09 / Finish: 13:15

**1. Welcome and adoption of the agenda – Aengus Finnan, President**

Aengus Finnan welcomed the membership  
Steve Tennant moved the motion to adopt the agenda  
Seconded by David Warren  
Motion carried

**2. Approval of 2007 AGM Minutes – Karen Flanagan McCarthy, Secretary**

Richard Flohil moved the motion to accept the minutes of the 2007 AGM  
Seconded by Steve Tennant  
Motion carried

**3. President's report – Aengus Finnan**

The President extended special thanks to the entire Board & Staff for their incredible efforts during another pivotal year for the organization. In summary: Erin Benjamin, the OCFF's inaugural Executive Director resigned after 7 years of service and left the organization in February 2008 to accept a position at CAPACOA. A national search for an ED was conducted spanning 9 months. Ultimately, the Board hired Peter MacDonald as the organization's new Executive Director. During the absence of an ED, Jennifer Fornelli served as General Manager with an enhanced role, and special thanks was extended to her. Special thanks was also extended to the Executive Committee of the Board which met daily by email, regularly by teleconference during the absence of an ED.

The President then recapped his three-year Strategic Plan as follows:

**2005/2006: Orientation** – A review of the OCFF's bylaws and *Board and Staff Handbook* was conducted.

**2006/2007: Clarity** - Building on the stability of those bylaws, policies & procedures, the Board established the terms of reference and mandates for committees and created other committees as needed.

**2007/2008: Input** – Stakeholder Research was to be the focus of this third year of the three year plan. The Board had some remarkable ideas about holding town hall meetings across the province. Unfortunately, these plans were challenged by the nine-month search for an ED. As a result, some of the stakeholder research work is outstanding.

The president stressed that the organization would be looking to the membership for input and reminded all that with Ontario Trillium Foundation funding, the OCFF would be able to conduct external stakeholder research, surveying festival organizations, festival attendees and artists on the topics of the social and economic value of Ontario festivals.

The president reiterated that this was a substantial three-year engagement of Staff, Board & Members and that all were looking forward to sharing the results of that work.

He noted that the *Board and Staff Handbook* would be made available to the membership. The Handbook details how the organization works; describes deliverables, etc. He also noted that the OCFF's first annual report is currently in the works, with details to be drawn from the committee work and reports, as well as the information and statistics of the 2008 conference, all of which should create a comprehensive snapshot of 2007/2008.

The president also spoke of the Deliverables Review, stressing that it is crucial as it describes what the organization does and what it means to its members. The OCFF's Strategic Plan will draw on this review.

The president then reminded the membership of the two critical votes that were taken in the past year: an innovative vote via email to address the issue of quorum at AGMs. That bylaw was changed by the membership; 10% of those in the room have to be voting members. The president then noted that there was quorum for this AGM. The second vote, taken during the previous year, dealt with the eligibility of Board candidates.

In closing the President spoke of the individual committees that had been set and the work they'd done: the Green Committee; Standing Finance Committee; Fundraising; Stakeholder Research and the Conference Steering Committee. The president took the opportunity to point out that the work of the Conference Steering Committee resulted in fewer, but more focussed and streamlined workshops at the conference. He also reminded the membership that much of the activity of the Conference Steering Committee came from member input and assured those present that the Board listens to the suggestions of OCFF members and takes critical time to review all those made.

The President spoke of the other committees: the Youth & Estelle Klein Award committees, which are now part of Conference Steering Committee; the Communications Committee; Policy, Personnel and Governance Committee; Board Nomination Committee and the Showcase Committee. The Art Beat Committee was dissolved as the Art Beat program has been incorporated into the ongoing deliverables of the organization as overseen by staff.

He then thanked all Board members for their time and talents, particularly during this intense time.

Moved by Eve Goldberg to accept the President's Report  
Seconded by David Warren  
Motion Carried

#### **4. General Manager's report – Jennifer Fornelli, General Manager**

The General Manager began her report by stressing the fact that 2007/08 had been a very busy year for the OCFF. She was grateful to have had the help of the three staff members and that of the Executive Committee.

She spoke of the fact that the OCFF's membership had stayed stable during the previous year and that it had been a presence at several industry events, including the North America Folk Alliance. The organization's funding also remained stable during this time.

The GM thanked the members for their continued support, especially during the search for a new ED. She extended thanks to the OCFF'S tremendous staff who had worked hard to improve the OCFF'S marketing material, including a newly designed web site and festivals brochure. In closing, she thanked the Board of Directors, especially President Aengus Finnan and noted that the staff is looking forward to working with the new ED, Peter MacDonald.

Moved by Candace Shaw to accept the GM's Report  
Seconded by Steve Tennant  
Motion carried

#### **5. Treasurer's Report – Dennis Landry, Treasurer**

The Treasurer began his report by thanking the Staff and Executive Committee for their support during his transition period as new treasurer – a position he agreed to fill when Peter MacDonald left the Board and Executive Committee to apply for the job as Executive Director.

The Treasurer announced that the OCFF had concluded its Deficit Reduction Strategy (DRS) which was introduced in 2006. It was phased out earlier than planned and the organization had posted a modest surplus this year.

He spoke of the very smooth transition in changing audit firms. According to the Treasurer, one of the advantages of this arrangement is that this firm is located in Ottawa, which makes it a bit easier

for the staff. From the point of view of revenue, it has been a successful year. The OCFF's expenses have been in line with the increased revenue, which leaves the organization in good shape, going forward.

The Treasurer spoke of plans for year ahead, stressing the fact that having Peter MacDonald as ED, with his previous experience as Board Treasurer, will enable staff to put recording mechanisms in place to make things easier.

He also spoke of the level of committee work, especially among members of the Green Committee, and noted how important it is for the Treasurer and staff to work more closely with the committees, especially going into the Budget process. Without knowing what funds various committees may need to carry out their work, it is impossible to identify the revenue gaps.

The Treasurer ended his report by stating that he would soon begin drafting the next year's budget and also continue to pursue the possibility of getting charitable status for the OCFF.

The Treasurer then introduced Scott Wark, Accountant with Welch LLP, to the membership.

## **6. Auditor's Report – Welch and Company**

The auditor presented the external report of the OCFF financial situation during the past year, explained the review process, and detailed its findings, providing clarity related to variances and corrections in the recording process, particularly as it related to changes in posting of advertising and promotional expenses.

Motion to accept the Auditor's Report moved by Jay Linden  
Seconded by Paul Northcott  
Motion carried

Motion to reappoint Welch LLP as the OCFF's auditor moved by Steve Tennant  
Seconded by Heather Dale  
Motion carried

## **7. Election of Directors – Jan Vanderhorst, Nominating Committee Chair**

Jan Vanderhorst announced the three candidates who have been elected to the Board of the Ontario Council of Folk Festivals: Tamara Kater, Dan Greenwood and Larry Leblanc.

Eve Greenberg moved to accept the Board of Directors (newly elected, as well as those continuing to sit as members of the Board.)  
Carol Teal seconded  
Motion carried

Steve Tennant moved to destroy the election ballots  
Dave Warren seconded  
Motion carried

Jan extended thanks to Peter MacDonald and Karen Flanagan McCarthy, as retiring members of the Board. Paul Mills thanked retiring President Aengus Finnan.

Former President Aengus Finnan presented the new Executive:

Paul Mills – President  
Ellen Hamilton – Vice President  
Dennis Landry - Treasurer  
The secretary's position is not yet filled.

Paul Mills, as new President of the Board addressed the membership, stating that he was excited about taking on the Presidency. It has been built on a firm foundation. He is also excited to be coming on as President, at this time, with a brand new ED. He reminded members that the input phase is not totally finished. Now that the organization has an ED, it is important that members tell the Board and ED what it is they want / need from the organization. It is equally important to review deliverables and bylaws. As President, he wants to engage personally with the membership and meet with EDs of member festivals.

The full Board of Directors was then presented to the membership.

Former President Aengus Finnan then offered the microphone to membership for comments:

The comments from the floor focussed on the level of noise in the music floor hallways, which made it difficult for people who had rented rooms for private showcases to be heard while performing. One of the delegates felt it was an important enough issue to raise it within the context of the AGM. Another pointed out that a discussion on this topic had already taken place on Maplepost. Several agreed that the noise levels did make it difficult to hear the showcasing musicians. One delegate suggested that the private showcases are held too late and some consideration might be given to encouraging daytime private showcases. Another added that it's not up to the Board to figure it out; it's up to the membership, the entire community, too. One delegate reminded those in the room that the OCFF has been holding private showcases for years and that there's a lot of great music. The suggestion was made that a 'working group' might be formed to discuss how we can deal with some of these issues and find solutions. Another delegate suggested that someone from the hotel be involved in that working group.

Newly elected OCFF President, Paul Mills, pointed out that our community grows from jamming, but that the OCFF has invested money in the larger 'official showcase' rooms. He suggested that the system is broke. It needs to be fixed.

The last comment from a delegate: the noise level increases as the evening goes on. Alcohol is a factor. If the OCFF is going to have monitors on the music floors, we need to pay to have 'bouncer'-like people doing it.

## **8. New Business**

None

## **9. Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn moved by Paul Loewenberg at 1:15