

2018
Strategic Conversations
League of American Orchestras Volunteer Council
MINUTES – CALL #1
Volunteer Presidents & Presidents-Elect
Wednesday, October 3, 2018
12 p.m.- 1 p.m. (Pacific) / 2 p.m. – 3 p.m. (Central) / 3 p.m. – 4 p.m. (Eastern)

Tiffany welcomed four Participants to the Strategic Conversation. Tiffany introduced herself, indicating that she serves as President of the Volunteer Council and is affiliated with the Marshall Symphony League in Texas. She then introduced the other Facilitators on the call, including Terry White, President-Elect of the Volunteer Council, with the Amarillo Symphony Guild, Sharon Hatchett, Secretary to the Volunteer Council, with the Southside Friends of the Chicago Sinfonietta; and Derek Weagle, with the League of American Orchestras serving as Liaison to the Volunteer Council. Tiffany then reviewed the schedule of future calls noting that the original call scheduled for October 31st call was moved a week later to November 7th.

Before asking the Participants to speak about their volunteer organizations, Tiffany reviewed the Working Agreement. In doing so, she emphasized the confidentiality of the discussions, citing the Vegas rule and that whatever is said in these calls stays here. Tiffany also advised the Participants that each of them will receive a copy of the Meeting Minutes to review, and may edit the content related to their orchestras as necessary to provide them comfort with what has been recorded. The Participants were also encouraged to communicate with each other.

INTRODUCTIONS – Getting to Know You & Your Organization

Tiffany walked the Participants through the Introductions section of the Agenda, covering what information each Participant should share about themselves, their volunteer organization, orchestras, etc.

During the introductions, each of the Participants shared top successes and challenges of their organizations, including the following:

Participant 1

Successes:

- Sustaining interest/participation in longstanding education/fundraising programs.
- Strong core of board members who are actively involved

Challenges:

- Attracting new and younger members
- Elevating use of the website and social media (Facebook, Twitter)
- Competing with larger orchestra in metro area for members and attendance at events.

Participant 2

Successes:

- Good at fundraising.
- Audience development
- Collaborative relationship with orchestra

Challenges:

- Mature group. Resistant to change and new ideas.
- Need fresh ideas to attract younger members.
- Need fresh fundraising ideas.

Participant 3

Successes:

- Successful fundraising events
- Congenial group who enjoy working with each other.

Challenges:

- Mature group. Fundraising is labor intensive
- Recruiting new members and younger people.
- Need for new fundraising ideas, including to supplement or replace current fundraising events.

Seeking information on advantages/disadvantages of being a 501(c)(3).

Participant 4

Successes:

- Long-term successful fundraising events.
- Large membership base.

Challenges:

- Attracting younger members
- Engaging members. Have large membership base but most are not engaged.
- Managing the politics and personalities between members

AGREED TOPICS FOR NEXT CALLS:

- Attracting and engaging new and young members
- Social media usage and tips.
- Advantages/disadvantages of being a 501(c)(3)
- Member engagement and responsibilities. What can be required versus encouraged.
- Leadership/management tips, and in particular, managing many personalities, large groups, and strong-willed personalities.
- Fundraising Ideas.
- A discussion on “one and done” projects and how this can be used to attract new members, including millennials.