

**2023 League Volunteer Council
Strategic Conversation #1 September 20, 2023 at 3pm Central**

Facilitators: Laurie Skjerseth, Volunteer Council President
Kathy Leibrand, Volunteer Council President-elect
Florence McLean, Volunteer Council Secretary
Melanie Hausmann, League Liaison

Attendees: JoAnn Sanborn, Adrian Symphony Orchestra; Paula Abernethy, Annapolis Symphony Orchestra; Betty Fox, Asheville Symphony; Ann Rivard, Huntsville Symphony Orchestra; Barbara Sturges & Karen Hoag, Illinois Philharmonic; Kellie Sullivan & Connie Stirgus-Marley, Kansas City Symphony Orchestra; Amy Ferguson, Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra; Judy Kalan, Madison Symphony Orchestra; Julie Brantley, Richmond Symphony; Michael Kikta, Rockford Symphony Orchestra; Janet Lambarth, Spokane Symphony; Liz Arend, Waco Symphony; Debbie Monark, Williamsburg Symphony Orchestra

Laurie Skjerseth, President opened the meeting, and welcomed the 14 symphony organizations and their 15 Presidents/President-elects. She stated the volunteer council mission statement, introduced the volunteer council members, mentioned the housekeeping rules for the meeting.

Each attendee was introduced by their Symphony Organization and then asked to state their name and tell why they volunteer for symphony and how long they have volunteered. The attendees have been involved with their orchestras anywhere from 2021 to over 40 years either via a volunteer organization or as a symphony board member. The individuals have served in various positions with their volunteer group/orchestra. Several individuals stated that they had a music background (educator/player). Involvement with their orchestras started because of their backgrounds in music, children, parents, retirement, need to be involved and belief in the transformative power of music. The attendees hope to learn from the attendees and the volunteer council.

The attendees moved into 3 breakout rooms to discuss the structure and relationship between the volunteer organization and parent orchestra. The moderators asked 3 questions for discussion:

1. Do you have a 501(c) (3)?
2. Does your Volunteer President join your symphony organization's Board meetings?
3. Does your Volunteer Organization have a good rapport with the board?

We assembled after the completion of the breakout rooms and the 3 groups reported out,

1. Results 501(c)(3) = 6
Under the Symphony Umbrella = 11
One left early and didn't participate in breakout rooms
2. All 17 volunteer organizations had representation on their Volunteer Association's Board.
3. Almost all had a good rapport with their Association Board/Staff.

Each had a good relationship with the orchestra management and provided all support to benefit the organization. It took some time for orchestra management to recognize the talent pool within the volunteer organization. volunteer hours tracking was discussed. Several organizations provide this to their symphony staff for grants.

Laurie then proceeded to wrap-up the session and asked everyone to submit a one-line statement of what they would like to experience and take away from being on Strategic Conversations. The next session will be on Fundraising. Strategic Planning and Volunteer Recruitment and Retention will also be discussed in future sessions after reviewing the survey that was sent.

Melanie mentioned that the next three meetings would discuss topics in more detail.

Minutes Submitted by Florence McLean
Secretary, Volunteer Council