ATSSB Region 8 Winter Meeting

Saturday, January 16, 2021 via Zoom

The meeting was called to order at 3:06.

The minutes from the previous meeting, which are available for viewing on the ATSSB Region 8 website, were approved with a motion from Mark Dorsey and a second from Matt Fisher.

Webmaster report (Rachel Berg):

Almost everything is updated. She is waiting on the Groesbeck Zone middle school music so it can be posted to the website. The directory is updated. Email her if you see any errors or items that need to be fixed.

Treasurer report (Stephanie Schmidt):

Marc screen shared the treasurer’s report. The region’s finances are very good due to having very few expenses, but Stephanie is concerned that there is over $2000 in entry fees not received yet from four separate auditions. Mark is at the point where he will send one more reminder email to directors, and then start calling business offices and administrators for schools that have not paid entry fees. If this issue is not resolved, then entry fees may be due by the contest date next year if this is not resolved. The treasurer report was approved with a motion from Kristi Flusche and a second from Matt Nelson. Stephanie added that there’s no need to call herand ask if entry fees have been received - she’ll call you if she has not received your school’s entry fees

No report from the region’s Vice Coordinator, Jon Schriver.

There were no reports from Brian Boecker (Groesbeck Zone middle school auditions) or Mark Dorsey (Robinson Zone middle school auditions). Both zones will be using music from Year A. The Groesbeck Zone uses unified audition music intended to be practiced by an entire band all at once, while the Robinson Zone uses audition music that is specific to each instrument.

Region Coordinator report (Marc Nichelson):

The proposed dates listed in the agenda are for 2021-2022, not 2020-2021.

Jazz auditions will be at Groesbeck HS on 9/22/21. Area recordings will take place in China Spring the following Wednesday.

Since we did not host clinics and concerts this year, clinicians for 2022 will be the same ones originally contracted for the 2021 clinics and concerts.

All dates for auditions and the clinic and concert were approved as a package, with a motion from Collin Anderson and a second from Laura Neal.

Scott Lanham (Jarrell HS) offered to host the region clinic and concert, since Jarrell ISD has a new auditorium. Marc does not have an opinion, he is just presenting the offer to band directors. Both Scott Lanham and Collin Anderson (from Groesbeck HS) made presentations in favor of their locations. Marc made it clear he did not have an opinion on the location of the clinic and concert, and was merely allowing both Scott and Collin to speak in favor of their respective locations.

Region 8 needs to update a rule. Right now the region writes a check for Area jazz entry fees so that schools don’t have to pay these fees. Marc proposed a new rule for schools to pay the $40 Area jazz entry fee (per student) to the region, which the region will then pay to the state. This proposal was approved with a motion from Gust Witt and a second from Mark Dorsey to approve.

Collin Anderson (state OPS chair) reported that the Outstanding Performance Series will be opened up in March. Everyone entering will need to record a video and audio file. Collin will figure out how to accommodate judging if it can’t be done in person. An OPS update was not included in the latest ATSSB December newsletter, since Collin didn’t have information at the time on how UIL Concert and Sightreading would proceed.

Marc asked for opinions on this statement: “small school directors are uncomfortable with the recording process for UIL this year”. Most directors present in the Zoom meeting agreed. Marc and Collin are working on making their facilities available for other bands to come make their UIL recordings, but they can only do so for a few bands. Some other regions are still doing in-person Concert and Sightreading contests. He posed the question, if host schools could figure out the flow of having an in person contest, how many schools would be interested in having C/SR in person. About 15-20 directors indicated they would like an in person option, so Marc will talk to Tony Clines and see if this is a possibility. Both Collin and Jon Schriver (Cameron HS) have administrators that are OK with hosting if there is a 90 minute gap between bands to disinfect and ventilate. Matt Fisher noted that Region 6 is having one panel adjudicate both the Concert and Sightreading contests, all in one shot, and that their region is having more contest sites with fewer bands in each location to accommodate all of their region’s bands. Concerns were expressed with video judging, such as dates falling after spring break when more kids may be going remote from exposure, and whether the judges will be judging in one take or if they will be able to rewind and view performances multiple times.

The Spring region meeting is tentatively scheduled for 9:00 AM Saturday, May 1, at Midway HS.

Marc asked for opinions from directors about digital region auditions vs in- person (live) auditions. He feels that most directors want to go back to live auditions. Informally, directors were overwhelmingly in favor of going back to live auditions. From the admin side of things, Marc said that digital auditions were okay and not optimal. Marc noted that not all directors acted ethically with digital auditions; for instance every single clarinet judge from one Area panel reached out to Marc reporting an egregiously unethical recording. (Apparently one entry in the clarinet panel was obviously a recording of a recording.) If you want to express an opinion on how you would like to see auditions held next year, you can always contact your ATSSB state representative. Venting is not inappropriate if you are not being a jerk while expressing your opinion!

There were no announcements of contests or new business.

The Zoom vote for the location of next year’s All Region clinic and concert was so close that Marc will set up a vote by email, with each school district voting once. Voting will be open for a period of one week. This way all votes can be verified much more easily than by counting raised hands in a Zoom meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:03 with a motion from Kevin De La Vergne and a second from Matt Nelson.