

Rockingham Choral Society By-Laws

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of the Rockingham Choral Society is to foster the performance and appreciation of choral music in the Seacoast Region of the State of New Hampshire. In keeping with this purpose, the Society annually presents concerts of choral works from all musical periods for the education and enjoyment of its members and its supporters in the communities of the Region.

For its members, the Society provides a unique opportunity to participate in an educational, cultural and social experience based on their shared love of music. Significant benefits of the experience include: the study and performance of music of a wide variety of periods and styles; the improvement of the individual's singing technique and the opportunity to perform as a soloist; and the fellowship that comes from creating music with others.

For its audiences in the Seacoast communities, the Society provides educational and enjoyable experiences of the highest musical quality. Its concerts, which feature local singers, soloists and instrumentalists, are examples of the significant contribution that the performing arts make to life in New Hampshire.

CONSTITUTION

Article I

Name of the Organization

The name of the organization shall be "The Rockingham Choral Society".

Article II

Purpose

The purpose of the Society shall be to foster the art of music with particular emphasis on the presentation of choral works of all periods and styles, to present concerts of the finest quality to the community, and for the education and enjoyment of its members.

Article III

Staff

The organization shall be composed of all unpaid volunteers except for the professional staff.

The Professional Staff shall consist of an annually contracted Music Director and an Accompanist.

BY-LAWS

Article I

Officers

The elected officers shall be: President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary, Soprano, Alto, Tenor and Bass Section Leaders.

Article II

Governing Bodies and Standing Committees;

- **Executive Committee**
 - Shall consist of the President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary, Music Director, and shall be chaired by the President.
- **Board of Directors**
 - Shall consist of the elected officers, the immediate Past President, the Music Director, Section Leaders, and a member-at-large. The Board of Directors shall be chaired by the President.
- **Standing Committees**
 - The standing committees shall be;
 - **Fund Raising**
 - **Librarian / Archivist**
 - **Concert / Facilities Management**
 - **Hospitality**
 - **Membership**
 - **Publicity / Social Media**

Article III

Professional Staff:

- Shall consist of a Music Director and an Accompanist who will be contracted each season as independent contractors to coincide with the choral Fiscal Year.
- The amount of pay and all other contractual details shall be negotiated and approved by the Executive Committee or their appointed delegate(s) and be paid in a manner mutually agreeable to the Board of Directors and the Music Director and the Accompanist.

Article IV

Duties of the Elected Officers and Members at Large

President

- Shall be an elected office.
- Shall preside at General meetings of the Society, Board of Directors and the Executive Committee and shall serve as an ex-officio member of all committees.
- Shall, with the assistance of the other officers, have general supervision of the business of the Society and shall be responsible for oversight of day-to-day operational functions and decisions and shall have broad powers to act on behalf of the Board of Directors between regular board meetings.
- Shall appoint standing committee chairs.
- Shall create such special committees as may be required for special projects.
- Shall be responsible for seeing that all positions remain filled in the event of an unexpected vacancy.

Vice President

- Shall be an elected office.
- Shall assume the President's duties in the absence or incapacity of the President.
- Shall assist the President, as assigned, in the performance of the President's duties.
- Shall have direct oversight of the Concert management and Fund-Raising standing committees

Treasurer

- Shall be an elected office.
- Shall oversee the development of a budget for approval by the Board of Directors.
- Shall keep regular books of account which shall be open at all times to any member in good standing of the Society.
- Shall give a full financial report at each regular meeting of the Board of Directors and at the annual meeting for the entire preceding year. The Fiscal year shall run from 9/1 to 8/31 of the following year.
- Shall oversee the preparation of and file all federal and state forms required by law including but not limited to
 - I9 and 1099 forms for independent contractors.
 - NH nonprofit annual registration and financial reporting (NHCT2-A)
- Shall prepare and file all forms required by organizations to secure performance rights to music when required.
- Shall pay the professional staff and all accounts due in a timely manner.

Treasurer (cont.)

- Shall have custody of all documents of title and value.
- Shall be responsible for an audit when requested by the Board of Directors.
- Shall turn over all books and documents to the succeeding treasurer.

Secretary

- Shall be an elected office.
- Shall keep minutes of all Annual business meetings of the Society and of the Board of Directors and Executive Committee.
- Shall have the minutes of all Board of Directors meetings available to members on a timely basis.
- Shall attend to the Society's correspondence as directed by the president, other officers, or the Music Director.
- Shall turn over all records to the succeeding secretary.

Section Leader

- Shall be an elected office.
- Shall be responsible for collecting dues and music fees and remitting both to the Treasurer.
- Shall be responsible, on request, for contacts between the Board of Directors and the membership.
- Shall be responsible for keeping weekly attendance and shall advise the Director regarding members not fulfilling membership requirements (See Article VIII)

Member-at-Large

- Shall be an elected office
- The Member-at-large shall represent the general community to the Board of Directors and shall be available for special assignments as requested by the president.

Article V

Duties of the Professional Staff

Music Director

- Inspire a shared vision among all members.
- Shall be responsible for maintaining and improving the musical standards of the Society.
- Shall select and procure all music to be performed in consultation and with approval of the Board of Directors. It is expected that there will be at least two concert programs per year, (normally in early December and late spring) with each program to be performed twice.
- Shall provide members with direction on preparation in advance of each rehearsal and provide constructive artistic, musical and performance-related feedback to the Chorus to achieve the best possible choral sound.
- Shall conduct all rehearsals and concerts and audition new members in September and January. Shall provide, at his or her own expense, a qualified substitute when unable to conduct a rehearsal or performance.
- Shall normally choose vocal soloists from within the membership and coach soloists and small group ensembles.
- Shall work with the Vice President to select venues and the Board of Directors to establish concert dates for all concerts prior to the first rehearsal of the fall semester
- Shall contract for all orchestral personnel after receiving Board approval for a concert budget and shall stay within the budget allowed.
- Network with other arts organizations, music directors, and community groups to increase the visibility of the Chorus and to encourage collaboration and avoid concert program or date conflicts when possible.
- Shall identify concert themes and collaborations that support the chorus' mission. Research and select appropriate music for the upcoming season.
- Provide the Board of Directors with concert musical program recommendations approximately 45 days prior to the start of each semester to allow the board to review all selections and allow the librarian sufficient time to acquire and organize the music for each semester.
- Organize and present a draft rehearsal schedule at the beginning of each concert semester.
- Attend Board meetings and provide a quarterly report to the Board.
- Communicate prior to the semester with the Accompanist regarding the rehearsal plan details as well as any other musical performance details and preferences and planning for recording rehearsal tapes when/ if required.

Accompanist

- Shall play for all rehearsals, auditions, and concerts. Shall provide, at his or her own expense, a qualified substitute when unable to conduct a rehearsal or performance.
- Shall be a salaried position. The amount of pay shall be determined by the Board and be paid in a manner mutually agreeable to the Executive Committee and the Accompanist.

Article VI

Duties of the Executive Committee and Board of Directors

Duties of the Executive Committee

- Shall be responsible for the day-to-day operations of the organization with oversight of the Board of Directors
- Shall meet and/or communicate as needed to discuss and decide day to day operational items as necessary.

Duties of the Board of Directors

- Shall be the governing board of the Society, responsible for carrying out policies properly. The Board shall meet at least once per quarter and shall adhere to parliamentary procedure established in Article XIV.
- Shall appoint a Music Director Search committee when needed, the size and structure of which shall be determined by the Board of Directors.
- The minutes of all board meetings shall be available to the general membership of the Society when approved, with the exception of executive sessions.
- Shall be responsible for setting the performance criteria and expectations of the professional staff.
- Shall negotiate, or appoint someone to negotiate, annual independent contractor agreements with the professional staff.
- Shall meet annually to review performance of the professional staff and determine details of any and all independent contractor agreements.

Article VII

Duties of Standing Committees

Fund Raising

- Other members of this committee shall be the Treasurer and the immediate past president.
- Shall be in charge of all fund-raising activities. Plans for any activities shall be presented to the Board of Directors for approval.
- Shall oversee the development of any grants of interest to the Society as required, following recommendations of the President or Music Director and approved by the Board of Directors.

Librarian / Archivist

- Shall work with the Music Director to facilitate the timely ordering and dissemination of printed music for each semester.
- Shall be responsible for collecting and storing past concert materials and recordings.
- Shall be responsible for maintaining, organizing, and disseminating all music owned by the organization.

Concert / Facilities Management

- Shall work with Vice President on rehearsal and performance Venue selection and preparation.
- Shall have primary responsibility for staging, placement of chorus and accompanists and lighting after discussion with the Music Director, and shall arrange for setting up and closing procedures.
- Shall arrange for front of house concert day staffing and procedures.
- Shall work with Treasurer to arrange for ticket disbursement, including free tickets, and the logistics of selling and collecting tickets at the door.
- Shall be cognizant of all concert details and serve as a focal point for dissemination of that knowledge.

Hospitality

- Shall organize Society functions requiring serving of food. These would include monthly rehearsal socials, refreshments for the annual meeting and receptions at concerts.

Membership

- Shall develop and oversee recruitment activities including fall and spring recruitment drives working with other committees as necessary.
- Shall create and distribute an informational package for members and prospective members at the beginning of each semester.
- Shall maintain a current list / database of member information.

- Shall determine and recruit sufficient committee members to help in the duties of this committee
- Shall develop and execute member activities that promote a sense of involvement and Choral community

Publicity / Social Media

- Shall be responsible for publicizing relevant information about Society events. This will include releases for newspapers, radio, and television and all media and social media outlets.
- Shall arrange for photographs where necessary.
- Shall keep updated lists of media, including names, addresses and telephone numbers.
- Shall be responsible for creating and maintaining accounts on all available social media platforms
- Shall promote all events and on social media platforms approved by the Board.
- Shall be responsible for compiling and maintaining an email list and emailing concert notices.

Article VIII

Membership Requirements

- Membership in the Rockingham Choral Society is open to any person age 16 or older who is interested in the purpose of the Society. Participation shall be at the discretion of the Music Director after individual auditions. Members may be requested to re-audition by the Music Director at any time.
- Regular attendance is stressed and members may not miss more than three rehearsals per concert semester without the express permission of the Music Director. After two absences, the Section Leader will remind the member of this obligation.
- Eligibility based on attendance to sing in a concert will be at the discretion of the Music Director.
- Attendance at the dress rehearsal is a mandatory prerequisite to singing in the respective performance. Extenuating circumstances may be considered by the Music Director.
- Although not a membership requirement, members are expected to participate willingly in the Society's fund-raising activities and to serve on committees.
- Concert attire shall be determined by the Board of Directors.
- Associate members are non-singing, dues paying members of the Society who make their services available to the Society.
- Honorary and/or Lifetime Emeritus membership may be bestowed upon an individual who has given outstanding service to the Society (i.e. service beyond the responsibility of any official position). They shall be recommended by the President and approved by a two thirds vote of the Board of Directors and shall be then exempt from dues for as long as they are members.

Article IX

Financial Obligations of Members

- Dues shall be established prior to the start of each season by the Board of Directors and shall be payable by the third rehearsal and are applicable to all singing and non-singing members except students and Emeritus members and are non-refundable.
- Any member may request a waiver or reduction of dues directly to the President or through the section leader. A waiver or reduction of dues for any member shall be at the discretion of the president who will inform the section leader and Treasurer regarding the waiver.
- The music for each concert shall be purchased by the individual members and shall be due on receipt of the music and is non-refundable.
- In addition to regular dues, members may become Friends, Sponsors, Patrons or Benefactors by making a donation to the Society.

Article X

Rehearsals and Meetings

- The Society shall rehearse weekly, during the concert season, at a time and place determined by the Board of Directors.
- A concert season shall normally consist of a Fall Semester commencing the first Tuesday after Labor Day and a Spring Semester commencing the first Tuesday after New Year's Day. Both starting dates are subject to change by the Board of Directors.
- Additional rehearsals may be held at the discretion of the Music Director with board approval.
- The last meeting of the season shall be a business meeting at which all unfinished business shall be acted upon.
- The annual meeting of the membership shall be held each year after the final spring concert. The Board of Directors will notify the membership of the time and date of the meeting.
- The annual meeting shall be for the purpose of electing officers, receiving reports from the committees, the officers and the director, reviewing the Bylaws and the Standing Rules, and for any other business that may arise.

Article XI

Nomination, Election, and Term of Officers

- The President shall appoint a Nominating Committee of 1 member from each section not being considered for an elected office 1 month prior to the annual meeting in an election year
- The final slate of officer candidates prepared by the Nominating Committee shall be presented to the general membership of the Society at the next to last regular rehearsal before the spring concert. At that time any additional nominations may be made from the floor.
- To be elected, a candidate must receive a majority of the votes cast at the annual meeting
- Interim appointments of elective officers shall be made by the Board of Directors.
- All officers shall be elected for a term of two years, and shall be eligible for re-election.

Article XII

Quorum

- Twenty percent of the current dues paying members shall constitute a quorum of the Society at the annual meeting.
- Two-thirds of the Board of Directors shall constitute a quorum of the Board of Directors.

Article XIII

Amendments

- The constitution and by-laws may be amended at any regular annual meeting of the Society by two-thirds of those present and voting. Notice of the proposed change shall be given at the previous weekly meeting and shall be in effect immediately upon receiving sufficient votes as to constitute passage.

Article XIV

Parliamentary Authority

- All parliamentary questions shall be settled by the most current version of Roberts "Rules of Order".

Article XV

Dissolution

- Dissolution of the Society shall conform to Internal Revenue Service requirements for a tax-exempt organization with regard to the distribution of assets and all applicable Laws of the state of NH.