

## Mercer Island Schools Choir Boosters

### Meeting Minutes

November 29, 2022 at 4:30 pm

**Chair:** Tom Henderson

**Attendees:** Shari Matheson, Angela Hoefler, Annalise Rockow, Brooke Conway

**Location:** Zoom

#### Meeting summary:

The group discussed the fundraising campaign and the proposed budget + changes to the budget. So far the drive has raised about \$2700 in the GiveButter account, far less than the \$6500 that we had as a goal, so we'll need to prioritize funds. Tom will officially close our fall fundraiser but will make it clear on the website that you can still donate. The group agreed to revisit budget as we go through the year and look for other fundraising opportunities.

Before discussing budget revisions, we discussed the issue we've been having related to corporate donation matching. We've been going through the process to set this up with Microsoft, who use Benevity for this. Benevity needs us to have our own 501c3 status OR for our subordinate status to be in an IRS database file. ParentBooster (who we are a subordinate of) has submitted us for the IRS database file, but the IRS hasn't added us yet and PB has no visibility into fixing this/speeding this process along. We currently have no ETA when we will be added to the IRS master file. As a result, we're currently blocked from corp donations for anyone using Benevity. (There's a platform called GuideStar that does a light 501c3 validation of status and info is now up there, but that doesn't help with our Microsoft matching situation.)

We discussed the pros and cons of staying with ParentBoosters, which is up for renewal in December (\$320). On the pro side they do our tax paperwork, but on the con side we have had some issues in addition to the corp matching situation. We discussed filing for our own 501c3 status (\$275) and filing our own tax paperwork (via EZ) as an alternative, which should also help fix our corp matching situation.

Angela made a motion to file for our own status and move away from ParentBoosters and Brooke seconded - all were in favor, none opposed. Tom will start the 501c3 status this week.

An important note - this 501c3 approach has NO impact on current donations/our ability accept charitable donations. We are able to provide current donators from 2022 with a letter outlining our status for their records as needed. Any donations that come to us in early 2023 will be covered by our new status (the IRS status is retroactive to when we turn in the application, even if not fully through the process by January 1).

Moving forward, we'll need to do our own taxes and stay on top of the timeline here. In January we will email people to see if they need a hard copy of their donation record - email letters have already gone to donors directly from GiveButter.

The group next reviewed the current budget. Given the fundraising shortfall, we made some changes. The group agreed to move the choral enrichment funding to 0, with new information from Annalise that she had received some grants to help cover this area (she has also applied for a grant to help pay for an accompanist and coaching, but this is TBC). We agreed to split the previously outlined choral enrichment line items between community building and our fixed costs in admin.

We next discussed some budget allocations for upcoming community building activities. The group agreed to allocate \$150 for the middle school ice skating community activity. Annalise will forward the invoice to Shari to get a check signed and delivered. Last year choir kids covered their own lunch, while band/orchestra were covered by boosters, which didn't feel good for the choir kids. Tom proposed covering the pizza via our community building budget (\$350), Brooke seconded, all agreed/no one opposed. Shari will figure out logistics.

We discussed some community building options for the high school, and ways to raise additional funds. For community building, we discussed potentially doing something at the high school level aligned with a UW choir day.

For additional fundraising, Annelise discussed the idea of doing a "min idol" type contest that would involve selling tickets and that the boosters could potentially do a bake sale at. We also discussed reaching out to local businesses about sponsorships. We also discussed doing an additional marketing push in late January. Angela is continuing to follow up with the MI Reporter about a story. If they publish one, we could promote it via a newsletter in January (along with sponsorships), as well as do a mini website refresh to include recordings of this year's performances and a renewed call for donations. We'll regroup on this and begin work on the newsletter in January. We also discussed the possibility of live streaming some of the performances (currently being recorded). We agreed to revisit this at the next meeting in January.

The group discussed if the boosters could help Annalise streamline the ordering process for choir tshirts. There's no simple way to do this through our website. Annelise and Angela will check in with the PTSA and schools to see if something is possible via their system (looking into if the elementary school kids could sign in through the middle school to pay).

We discussed if the high school choir could sing the anthem at a basketball game. It was agreed that games have better sounds systems in place, so this would be a good environment. Tom to kick things off to see if there's a girls/boys varsity game back to back that could work - we'll need to coordinate with the band. In the future if we have the choir perform for a football or other outdoor game we'll provide a recording.

The next choir boosters meeting will be January 17, 2023 at 4:30pm at high school. We adjourned at 5:45pm.

**Minutes Submitted by:** Brooke Conway