



Minutes of the
 SOUTHERN CONFERENCE OF LOCALS
 of the
 AMERICAN FEDERATION OF MUSICIANS

JUNE 27th & 28th, 2020
 Virtual Conference

Saturday, June 27, 2020
Conference called to order at 10:05 A.M.
by Stewart Williams, President of
the Southern Conference

President Williams welcomes the delegates to our virtual conference. He explained the dilemmas that led to the decision to have a virtual conference. He then directed the delegates to the link locate on the dfwmusicians.com website where the link for the Southern Conference was located. He then gave everyone a virtual tour of how things would work for the virtual conference.

Since we are doing a virtual conference, there will not be a roll call this year.

President Williams invites Sam Dinkins III, delegate from Local 65-699, to deliver the Invocation.

President Williams asked for a motion to approve the 2019 Minutes and the Agenda for the 2020 Conference. MS - to approve the minutes; two corrections, delegate from Local 375 was Kate Pritchard instead of John Allen, Laura Ross with one correction, plaque instead of plague for the award for Jeff Apana.

MSC - Minutes approved with corrections.

Approval of 2020 Agenda
 Motion - Bruce Schultz; Second – Laura Ross,
 MSC – 2020 Agenda approved

Dignitaries & Guests are recognized:

From the AFM:

International President	Ray Hair
International VP	Bruce Fife
International Rep	Steve Begnoche

International Sec/Treas.	Jay Blumenthal
IEB	Ed Malaga
IEB	Dave Pomeroy
SSD	Rochelle Skolnick
Legislative Director	Alfonso Pollard
Director of Touring	Tino Gagliardi
Organizing	Michael Manley
Assistant Director EMSD	John Painting
Assistant to the President	Ken Shirk
AFM-EPF Counsel	Jani Rachelson
Milliman Principal Actuary	Tim Herman

President Williams welcomes International S/T Jay Blumenthal to speak.

Jay was thankful that we are able to meet and have a conference, he said this was the most serious crisis the AFM has had to live thru. He spoke about the importance of our many members being included in the stimulus money approved by congress. Working with other unions thru the Arts and Entertainment Media Industry and the Department of Professional Employees of the AFL-CIO, we were able to make sure our members were included to receive stimulus money. President Hair fought arduously to make sure our gig musicians who would not normally allowed to receive unemployment benefits, were now able to receive unemployment benefits. He told us about the fundraiser where Ray Chew asked for logistical support to help raise funds for single engagement musicians whose jobs were lost due to Covid-19. Tino Gagliardi was the point person who helped put this event together.

Jay said many employers asked to maintain their presence on the Internet via previously captured material, the AFM allowed for some flexibility on this for a limited amount of time. He informed us that MPTF will continue to fund performances over the internet

during the pandemic and has also established MPTF Music Family Scholarships.

The trend of losing members was turning around, 2019 saw an increase of 647 members, which means that musicians were showing more interest in our union. He said the 2019 finances were good. He gave us stats on chapters that were lop sided, gave us stats on the multi card rebates, and the Lester Petrillo Fund.

He told us that revenue is down, but the workload is great. We must carry on thru the pandemic, musicians need the union more now, than ever before.

President Williams thanks Jay for his remarks and reminds him that he is an honorary member of the Southern Conference.

There was a short question and answer period with Jay before he had to depart for another engagement.

Before President Williams introduces Alfonso Pollard, Legislative & Political Director, he points everyone to the contribution button for Tempo and how to login to make a Tempo donation.

Steve Begnoche speaks to the conference while we are working out technical difficulties with Alfonso's computer.

Steve Begnoche, IR for the Southern Conference, thanks all of the locals that he has visited so far this year. His plan is to see how local officers interact with their members. He explains the nuts and bolts of running a local and gave us his ideas on how locals could improve their productivity. He reminds us of the due dates for the 990 & LM reports which are based on the physical year of your local. All LM reports are to be filed online. He advises everyone to adhere to the Dept. of Labor deadlines.

In April of 2020, the IEB met and formed Pandemic Policy Advisory forms that were sent to all locals. The forms allow the local boards to review them and adapt whatever policies they want to use to help their local with some financial relief if needed. Steve walks the delegates thru the various forms that were sent out.

Dave Pomeroy jumps in to thank Steve for jumping in and stepping up to the plate to fill Cass's shoes.

President Williams interrupts Steve to allow Alfonso to step in and do his report. Steve will be back later to finish up his report.

Alfonso Pollard, Legislative and Political Director, and Director of Diversity is up next. Alfonso tells us that the U.S. is faced with a three-fold crisis; 1) public health pandemic, 2) global economic free fall, and 3) long term structural racism. The AFM as an institution is affected by all of these, and he is in a unique position to work on all three problems. He, along with President Hair and members Congress, work to affect legislation that is meaningful to address the concerns of the AFM; and with Secretary/Treasurer Blumenthal, the AFL-CIO, and the AFM Diversity Committee, he helped to develop a balance statement and a plan of action to address the racial unrest that was perpetuated by the death of George Floyd.

He stated that from labor's point of view, a solution was started with the CARES ACT, there were five economic essentials that were exposed by the labor movement:

1. Keep America Healthy
2. Keep front line workers safe.
3. Keep workers employed and protect earned pensions.
4. Keep state & local governments, public schools, and US Post Office solvent.
5. Keep America competitive – provide for our infrastructure.

For the AFM to be effective, we work with a number of coalitions, the AFL-CIO, DPE (Dept of Professional Employees) and AEMI (Arts, Entertainment & Media Industry). With these coalitions we work on legislative agendas centered around Immigration, CARES ACT, and the HEROS ACT.

Last thing is Policing in the U.S. – the tragic death of George Floyd produced the George Floyd Policing Act = HR 7120. Every union in the US issued statements covering our opinion on racial justice and Black Lives Matter, including President Hair and the AFM Diversity Committee, which states there is no place for racial hatred.

Alfonso responds to various questions from the floor regarding the use of police force. He closes out by mentioning the Skate Kid, an eight-year-old African American girl who made a video skating in front of Black Lives Matter Plaza, as her way of contributing to what is happening today.

President Williams makes a pitch for TEMPO, and then we break for lunch.

After lunch break, President Williams announces the two committees:

Finance Committee: Aaron Pino – Chair
Vince Santoro
Elizabeth Pistolesi

Resolutions Committee: Karen Schnackenberg, Chair
Brad Buckley
Tammy Kirk

President Williams hands off to our next speaker, International President Ray Hair. President Hair thanks the Southern Conference crew for putting together this zoom conference and praised the team for an incredible job.

He wanted to address three topics: 1) Racism Issue, 2) The Federation and 3) Pension Presentation. On March 2, 2020, President Hair, Alfonso Pollard and Jerry Nadler had breakfast and then went over to meet Judy Chu. They were there just as the 1st Covid legislation began to commence. The House and Senate would not shake hands with them, that is when the panic began. On March 12, before he left New York, Rochelle gave him his 1st Covid Side Letter to sign.

At the end of May when the George Floyd murder occurred, things begin to unwind; President Hair was faced with one nightmare after another. When the displays of racism hit the fan, he was reminded of a quote, “Our lives begin to end, the day we become silent about things that matter” by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

For the next few minutes President Hair told a brief story about his life and the things he witnessed as a child, a young adult, and more importantly, as a musician growing up in the South. One moving story was the one he talked about being in Shreveport in 1984, at the Southern Conference, and he looked up and saw two Confederate Flags on the Conference Banner, he looked over at Randy McCall and the two of them decided to make a motion to remove those Confederate flags, but then they decided to wait, and the motion was postponed until 1985, the motion was then made to remove those two Confederate Flags.

Ray opened up and shared with us how racism was so prevalent back where he grew up. The George Floyd killing brought flash backs of racism and hatred to him.

He mentioned so many historical moments of the Civil Rights Movement: the killing of Medgar Evers, the bombing that killed four young black girls at the 16th Street Church bombing, the murder of James Chaney, Michael Schwerner and Andrew Goodman, and many others. All of these tragic moments are why we have to stand together to make a difference in this world.

He then paid compliments to the IEB and AFM staff, all who have been working tirelessly to keep the AFM moving forward. The AFM is continuing with recordings President Hair pleaded with the Networks to keep paying H & W for TV Shows and films. MPTF is back and has money and resources. When the pandemic hit and things shut down, MPTF figured out a way to co-sponsor and live stream performances at 100% plus an additional 10% to the local scale for a live stream. He went on to explain some of the various live streamed events from MPTF.

He mentioned that 11 people were furloughed on May 8th, they are still employees, but furloughed.

Then he turned to the pension presentation. Tino Gagliardi, Laura Ross, Jani Rachelson, Tim Hermann, and Brad Buckley represented the pension panel.

Jani explained the complications involved with applying for the reduction in benefits. Based on what the Treasury decides regarding our application to reduce benefits, ballots will be mailed out for voting. She explained how the voting process will work.

President Hair said that even with COVID-19, the fund office did not miss a beat with pension payments. President Hair explained how COVID -19 caused Broadway to stop, Disney finally started laying off people, this all had a major effect on our contributions. We cannot predict the future.

Jani then explained the Suspension Plan and Reduction Plan and how the trustees decided on the best way to level the playing field.

Tim shared his screen to explain how the early retirement subsidy works.

President Hair closed out the pension discussion telling us that if MEPRA is approved, then there will be a vote; the trustees knew it would affect the lives of many people. We will need a yes vote from everyone so that we can have a pension fund.

Brad Buckley from the retiree's pension committee complemented Brad Eggen and their panel, he said the AFM should be congratulated on how they handled the possibilities for keeping the fund solvent, a big Thank You to President Hair and the Trustees.

Time for a little break.

President Williams welcomes Rochelle to speak. Rochelle is sorry that we are not able to see each other in person but she is happy to be a part of the conference.

Covid-19 brought the symphony, opera, and ballet companies to a halt. SSD had many calls about what to do, and Rochelle's answer was to do all we could to keep the money flowing into the musicians' pockets. The AFM took action to bargain a streaming side-letter agreement to the IMA. Their efforts were successful. Local officer and orchestra committee played an enormous role in making everything possible for the musicians.

The paycheck protection program, boards and managements, played a big role in the continues success of many organizations. The SSD player conferences met on al weekly basis throughout COVID-19. A few orchestras took steps to find ways to keep a live presence for their audiences.

SSD is working on the development of a safety plan for returning to work. Everyone is now looking at the fall season to see what it may look like.

There should be no scenario where a n orchestra does not have enough money to pay its musicians. Five of the largest foundations in the US are stepping up their contributions to the ARTS for 2020, they are using bonds and borrowing against their endowments to distribute more to the organizations in need. They saw a \$1.7 billion increase in giving, our symphony, opera, and ballet companies should pay close attention to the example set by the foundations.

Rochelle thanks the SSD staff and negotiators for their hard work during the pandemic year.

After Rochelle's presentation, there was a group talk, the discussion was on what to do once things started shutting down. The panel consisted of Bruce Fife, Tino Gagliardi, Michael Manley, John Painting, Steve Begnoche, Alfonso Pollard, and Rochelle Skolnick,

Bruce started off by saying how quickly information was changing constantly; we have to make this challenge as an opportunity to change and come out better than we started.

Tino told us that on March 12, everything shut down, and everybody on tours was able to get home. The AFM was able to negotiate for musicians to get health care until March 31st. Tino talked about the guidelines we will need to get back to work, pit musicians have a lot of concerns to deal with when they return to work.

Michael said most organizing is on pause right now, they are looking at online training opportunities.

John Painting gave an extensive report on how the Joint Venture Agreement works. The joint venture is for places where there is no employer.

Alfonso is trying to move the US Senate to help people during the pandemic. It is time to beak with McConnel. There are three coalitions we should look at to help move the HERO's Act.

Rochelle told us that FIM is trying to collect information from all over the world on distance between various instruments. She thinks the best course for SSD is to work with people in our communities to see what specific needs are.

Stewart has a few more comments and adjourn for the day.

Sunday, June 28th

President Williams opens the conference at 10:00am.

Lovie Smith-Wright reads the Diversity Statement on Racial & Social Justice written by the AFM Diversity Committee and will be published in the July issue of the IM.

Jay thanks the diversity committee for the statement made.

Next up is Ken Shirk. Ken speaks on the challenges for elections during the pandemic. The first rule of law is to follow your bylaws. He explains rules for sending out notices to your membership. Electronic elections are a no, no.

Then he explains the waivers that were established by

the IEB to help locals during the pandemic. Ken’s final thought for everyone is to take care of yourself. Delegates are given an opportunity to ask Ken questions.

President Williams announces the Credentials Committee: Deborah Dansby-Wells, Chair Sharon Montgomery & Marta Bradley

Steve Begnoche and John Painting finish up his discussion on the Joint Venture Agreement.

President Williams turns the chair over to S/T Smith-Wright for committee reports.

We have three committees, the first report is from the Credentials Committee, Deborah Dansby-Wells, Chair, thanks Marta Bradley, & Sharon Montgomery.

There are 24 Locals attending, 48 delegates, 7 locals are absent, 16 guests are present, and 12 dignitaries. Motion made by Laura Ross, motion 2nd by Bruce Schultz. Passed.

Finance Committee: Aaron Pino, Chair Examined records June 1, 2019 – May 30, 202. Balance in account is \$9,296.11. Total receipts are \$15,146.84; Total disbursements is \$11,950.01, Balance in account is \$3,196.13. There are 32 locals in the conference, 25 have paid, 7 still unaffiliated. Aaron thanks Vince Santoro and Elizabeth Pistolesi.

Moved for adoption. Motion – Aaron Lack 2nd – Discussion, Approved.

Resolutions: Karen Schnackenberg, chair Brad Buckley and Tammy Kirk. The Committee was moved by Ray’s Statement and submits the following statement.

Music, the life, and livelihood of our members is a universal language that blends and unites all cultures, races, and the higher ideals of humankind. The Local Unions of the American Federation of Musicians, as the representative of our members, must strive to achieve and demonstrate the same unity by treating all members with respect, dignity, and equal representation regardless of race, color, religious affiliation, or sexual orientation.

Therefore, be it resolved, that the Southern Conference of Locals, a conference of the American Federation of Musicians of the United States and Canada, endorses the statement of the American Federation of Musicians of the United States and Canada that “racism, bias, bigotry, and bullying are intolerable in our union, or any other union including police unions, and

in any workplace. We oppose discrimination of every kind, in every place, and we decry the hatred that motivates it.”

Motion to approve, 2nd by Laura Ross Discussion Approved Aaron thanks Tammy & Brad.

Lovie thanks everyone for the conference, and reaches out to President Hair, saying I was very moved and thank you.

Lovie turns chair back over to President Williams.

President Williams makes closing remarks, he appreciates everyone’s patience. We are silenced in a way that is personal to us, like no one else.

We as brothers and sisters have shared a lot, President Williams thanks everyone, and thanks President Hair for his leadership in being an anchor for us all. This is all about justice for everyone.

Alfonso extends his deepest appreciation to everyone and thanks President Williams & S/T Smith-Wright.

President Williams announces dates for next year, June 21st & 22nd.

Meeting is adjourned at 12:19.

Tempo contributions for the 2020 Southern Conference is \$994.

The following delegates with proper credentials are present:

Local #	City	Delegates
23	San Antonio	Joan Carroll Richard Oppenheim David Reinecke Rene Ford
65-699	Houston	Sharon Montgomery Lovie Smith-Wright
71	Memphis	Nathan Nix Saundra D’Amato
72 –147	Dallas Ft Worth	Stewart Williams Aaron Pino Karen Schnackenberg
80	Chattanooga	Megan Chisom
94	Tulsa	Tammy Kirk Bruce Schultz
116	Shreveport	John Howe
123	Richmond	George Tuckwiller II David Hartley
125	Norfolk	John Lindberg Linda Dennis
148-462	Atlanta	Bruce Kenney Christina Ottaviano

161-710 Washington, DC	Michael Moore Siraaj Rhett Marta Bradley Ed Malaga Sharon Wolfolk Peter deBoor Sharon Wolfolk
174-496 New Orleans	Cindy Mayes
256-733 Birmingham	Michael Bradt
257 Nashville	Dave Pomeroy Laura Ross Vince Santoro
297 Wichita	Kevin Findley
342 Charlotte	Elizabeth Pistolesi
362-691	Jonathan Bradley Ben Miller
375-703 Oklahoma City	Kate Pritchett
389 Orlando	Sam Zambito Deborah Dansby Wells Mike Avila
427-721 St Petersburg	Richard Sparrow Charles Rice
433	Nicole Bogatz Aaron Lack
444 Jacksonville	Andy Bruck Brad Buckley
447-704 Savannah	Paul Lott
500 Raleigh	Jessica Kunttu
546 Knoxville	Jeffrey Whaley
579 Jackson	Mimi Linehan
655 Miami	Jeffrey Apana Charles Reskin
674 Covington	Gary Williams
777 Biloxi	Helen June