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May 18, 2021

Dear Juneau Symphony Musicians:

The Juneau Symphony Board met in retreat/work sessions in late March and early May to critically evaluate organizational/Board performance and consider the Player Relations and Development Committee's (PRDC) recommendations from the Nov/Dec 2020 Musician Survey.

I am pleased to share the Board's response (attachment 1) to the PRDC's thoughtful recommendations and survey input. The Board response incorporates areas the Board identified as part of our continuous improvement process. Also attached are the PRDC's recommendations to the Board from the Nov/Dec 2020 Musician Survey provided to the Board in April 2021.

I hope you will take some time to review the PRDC's recommendations and Board's action items, several of which have already been completed, and others to be accomplished in the near future.

The Board remains very grateful to the musicians who completed the survey, providing thoughtful comments and suggestions that will contribute to the continued success, growth and improvement of the Juneau Symphony.

Among the many action items the Board, executive staff and PRDC are undertaking, will be periodic facilitated listening gatherings among the Board, staff and membership. The first of these will be held via Zoom; however, we plan to do these in-person as we can safely do so in the future.

Please hold the evening of Monday, June 28th, 6:30-8:00 PM Alaska Time Zone for a facilitated listening session. More details will be forthcoming in early June.

On behalf of the Board, I wish you a healthy start to the summer. I look forward to seeing many of you soon as we head toward the fall and resume concerts on the mainstage.

Sincerely,

Beth Giron Pendleton, President
Juneau Symphony

Cc: JS Board of Directors, Lifetime Members, Charlotte Truitt, Taylor Young

PRDC Recommendations to Juneau Symphony Board April 2021

These recommendations were developed based on review of the Musician Survey distributed by the Player Relations and Development Committee (PRDC) in November and December 2020.

- 1) Engage in a purposeful change management process that proactively addresses organizational issues arising from the extent of change in the Juneau Symphony in recent years, to foster inclusivity and organizational trust. For example, consider:
 - Identifying common goals and values, starting with survey responses
 - Hiring an outside professional consultant to evaluate the organization and recommend solutions
 - Conducting professionally facilitated listening sessions IN PERSON, as soon as we are able to safely do so; an introduction of the process over Zoom might be workable, but most of the sessions should be conducted face-to-face
 - Starting before the new Music Director is selected, but including him in the change management process once hired
 - Reviewing the mission and values statements in a transparent and inclusive way
- 2) Provide clarification to member musicians of current policies, procedures and opportunities to participate in organizational planning and decision-making. For example, consider:
 - Providing information and specific opportunities for musicians to participate in constructive dialogue and committee work ahead of major organizational decisions
 - Providing information on how the symphony roster is created for each concert; suggest Q&A and/or video interview with Charlotte, Taylor and Franz on the realities of the staffing process
 - Providing historical information on the number and funding for non-local musicians
 - Maintaining a roster online of the section leaders and principal players
 - Setting up a meeting of all section leaders and principals with the Executive Director and Music Director each season, to review procedures and clarify roles
 - Detailing how board members are recruited and selected
- 3) Establish a plan for regular assessment of musicians' playing abilities. For example, rather than traditional auditions for all members, consider:
 - Asking section leaders and principals to organize small ensembles and sectionals so that some of the assessment can be handled with a less threatening approach
 - Discussing with the new Music Director the challenge of striking the best balance for Juneau Symphony between honoring past service and striving for highest quality
- 4) Form a working group to reassess the Juneau Student Symphony. The working group should include musicians and local music teachers of both youth and adult students, to determine unmet needs to be filled by JSS.2
- 5) Consider fundraising, recognition, community engagement and other ideas put forth by survey respondents; acknowledge the survey process if some are implemented!

6) Make a redacted version of the full survey responses available on the password protected musician webpage (draft to be provided). Many of the comments are very thoughtful. Reading the full survey with a few redactions promotes understanding of different points of view and of the history of the Juneau Symphony.

7) PRDC-specific recommendations will be developed separately and implemented by the PRDC

**Juneau Symphony
Board Retreat
May 6, 2021 - 6:00-8:30 PM**

Notes/Actions

Retreat Outcomes: The Juneau Symphony (JS) Board identified and confirmed actions JS will take that:

- Respond to Player Relations and Development Committee (PRDC) recommendations (April 2021)
- Reflect Board discussion at its March 2021 Retreat session
- Address member survey input (Nov/Dec 2020)

JS MISSION, GOALS AND VALUES

New Action

- Revisit the JS Mission and (*especially*) the Core Values statements – to more effectively communicate JS’s commitment to values identified as important to the organization, inclusive of survey results (e.g., youth and player development, the orchestra as a community of musicians). Share in draft with members for their comment.
 - Assigned to: Beth, Heather, Annie, Margaret
 - Timeframe: Summer 2021, for Board approval fall 2021

CHANGE / ORGANIZATION MANAGEMENT*

Actions already underway

- Include PRDC members as advisors to committees and task forces
- PRDC update as a regular agenda item at Board meetings

New Actions

- Host periodic (quarterly, as practical), facilitated listening-Q/A sessions among members, staff and Board, in person when possible, including a social component to get to know one another better
 - Assigned to: Leadership Team (President, VP, and ED)
 - Timeframe: begin in June 2021 (Zoom) and in-person as it is safe to do so
 - Host periodic social event(s) with goal of celebrating the JS, recognizing the contributions of all who make it happen, and increasing sense of community – with musicians, volunteers, major donors, staff, Board
 - Assigned to: Executive Director (ED)
 - Timeframe: planning summer picnic social to kickoff next season!
 - Recognize that the arrival of the new Music Director (MD) will bring change and will require active “change management” – including communication with the MD on JS intentions and issues, and effective communication with members as this transition occurs
 - Assigned to: Leadership Team, with follow through by ALL directors
 - Timeframe: On-going with on-boarding of new MD
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*The Board did not adopt the PRDC recommendation to hire an outside consultant to evaluate the JS at this time. This recommendation may be re-visited 2-3 years out post-pandemic, with the new Music Director in place and following one or more typical concert operating seasons.

- Continue including small ensembles/chamber music groups in the JS season calendar, to provide more opportunities to play and to foster cohesiveness and community among musicians
 - Assigned to: ED, MD, Concertmaster
 - Timeframe: On-going
- On-going Policy Committee review of policies for currency, cohesiveness, clarity
 - Assigned to: Policy, Governance and Nominations Committee
 - Timeframe: On-going
- Articulate the process to channel, address and resolve issues within the organization, with parallel updates to JS Player Handbook and JS policies as needed
 - Assigned to: Policy, Governance and Nominations Committee (Lead) and PRDC
 - Timeframe: Summer/fall 2021

IMPROVING COMMUNICATION & UNDERSTANDING

Actions already underway

- Provided clarification to member musicians of current JS policies, procedures; posted JS By-laws and policy documents to player portal on JS website
- Made a redacted version of the full (Nov/Dec 2020) musician survey responses available on the password protected musician webpage
- Use a consistent range of communication tools – member emails, *Clef Notes*, Board newsletter to membership, JS Musicians Facebook page, periodic listening-Q/A sessions with Board, staff and members (*new*), and regular updates and distribution of JS Player Handbook (by PRDC)
- There will be focused communication with membership summer/fall 2021 as part of the MD selection process – opportunity for meaningful dialog about this change & opportunities

New Actions

- Regularly communicate any major Board actions/decisions to the membership (e.g., *Clef Notes* or Board newsletter)
 - Assigned to: Leadership Team and PRDC
 - Timeframe: On-going

ADDITIONAL PRDC RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Establish a plan for regular assessment of musicians' playing abilities.** For example, rather than traditional auditions for all members, consider asking section leaders and principals to organize small ensembles and sectionals so that some of the assessment can be handled with a less threatening approach.

New Action

- Discuss this topic and ideas with each MD candidate during the final evaluation process
 - Assigned to: Leadership Team
 - Timeframe: Summer/fall 2021

- 2. Form a working group to reassess the Juneau Student Symphony.** The working group should include musicians and local music teachers of both youth and adult students, to determine unmet needs to be filled by JSS.

New Action

- Establish a task group to address youth/development/education – to (1) make an immediate plan for fall 2021 and (2) work with the new MD to design a more permanent solution for the future. Include a representative from the Music Educators group on the on-going task group.
 - Assigned to: Executive Director (Lead), Franz, Alan with Board support (Beth, Heather, Myrna)
 - Timeframe: Summer 2021
- 3. Consider fundraising, recognition, community engagement and other ideas put forth by survey respondents;** * acknowledge the survey process, if some are implemented
- Assigned to: Marketing, Development and Communications Committee and Executive Director
 - Timeframe: On-going

****Some of the great ideas suggested by Survey respondents included:*** online fundraising events; online social opportunities for musicians; more virtual concert with streaming memberships; solo, mini concerts or videos that create JS income; researching new grant opportunities; developing a merchandise line of products for sale, marketing, and player, staff, donor recognitions, etc.

