



Minutes from the North American Brass Band Association  
Board of Directors Meeting  
September 11 – 12, 2009  
Springhill Suites Hotel, Chicago, Illinois

Members present: Stephen Allen, Rico Belotti, Don Bookout (vice president), Randi Bulla, Barb Burtch, Jim Grate (treasurer), Lee Harrelson, Susan Henthorn (secretary), Charles Howard, Anita Cocker Hunt, Joe Johnson, Betsy Jones, Rusty Morris (president), Thomas Stein, Helen Tyler, and Frank Washburn

Members absent: Arthur Henry

**FRIDAY, September 11, 2009**

- I. President Rusty Morris called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m., thanking all for coming to Chicago for the Board meeting, acknowledging that attendance at Board meetings takes commitment and sacrifice. For the benefit of the three new Directors (Randi Bulla, Charles Howard, and Betsy Jones), President Morris invited all Board members to introduce themselves.
- II. President Morris then reviewed the agenda and goals for the meeting, including topics and issues to be discussed in individual committee meetings, and reiterated that the minutes of the last board meeting have already been approved on [nabbaboard.org](http://nabbaboard.org).
- III. President Morris called for reports from the Treasurer, the Bridge editor and Anita Cocker-Hunt regarding the Vendors for the Championships.
  - A. Treasurer's report (Jim Grate) – Treasurer Grate distributed three net worth statements: Sept. 08, March 09, and Sept. 09. Note: the Budget Sheet handout should read “As of 09/09/2009.” This year's total net worth is just about the same as last year's (\$39,653.64 as of 8/31/09), but the checking account balance is about \$1,000 less (\$4,535.78 as of 8/31/09). Because of this, Board members may want to reconsider about asking for reimbursement for travel to this weekend's meeting. He also pointed out that the bulk of both NABBA's income and expenses are related to the Championships. He also suggested that it might be time to explore working with an actual budgeting process, that a more structured budget might provide members with a better sense of responsibility for each area. Committee chairs might also want to know what funds are earmarked for their areas.

After discussion about the current bank balance and the need to be equitable regarding reimbursement for board members to attend the September meeting, President Morris noted that planning for reimbursement at a specific level would allow the treasurer to include September board expenses as a known budget item.

**Randi Bulla moved that board members be reimbursed for the September board meeting up to \$225.00 each. Frank Washburn seconded. No further discussion. Motion carried.**

- B. **Bridge report** (Betsy Jones) – All bands are now able to submit material for publication in *The Bridge*, regardless of NABBA affiliation. If an issue fills up, she will make decisions on what to cut, but that has not happened to date. *The Bridge's* facebook page has already generated some articles. Helen Tyler suggested that the Development Committee might take on the issue of how to get information out to

bands, perhaps through the regional liaisons. Rico Belotti noted that liaisons are primarily working only with active NABBA bands.

- C. **Vendor report** (Anita Cocker-Hunt) – Anita distributed copies of the vendor information packets (letter, card, webpage, information page, brochure for vendors, list of vendors from last year, a list of donated prizes, and a follow-up thank you note). She also keeps a notebook with all vendor information – who has been a vendor and who has not. Contacting vendors at Midwest has been a good way for her to get to know vendors in person, face-to-face. The donated prizes were a very good addition to the contest; stamping cards for the Saturday night drawing also worked well. Because some regional vendors may not make the trip to Raleigh (or Grand Rapids) we may need to pick up others in their place. Rusty thanked Anita for her tremendous work, especially for this past year. All board members should keep NABBA in mind whenever they see vendors – suggest that the vendor might benefit from participating in NABBA.

- IV. President Morris presented a proposal for a new NABBA membership benefit, a long-term health care coverage policy provided by The American Income Life Insurance Company. Following vigorous discussion, **Don Bookout moved that we table the AIL proposal until we have more information about the legal, financial, procedural, administrative, membership aspects of the proposal. (Susan Henthorn seconded). Motion to table carried.**

- V. Interest for Future NABBA location (Rusty Morris) – The Little Rock Convention & Visitors Bureau is interested in bringing championship to Little Rock in 2012. (The Natural State Brass Band is **not** interested in hosting it, however they could help guide the CVB in their efforts.) Little Rock, Cincinnati and Grand Rapids will be at the Thursday night meeting prior to the Raleigh championship to pitch for 2012.

- VI. **Silver Bells** – Goals and Future (Jim Grate) – Initiated during Anita Cocker-Hunt’s presidency, the Silver Bells account has not been as active in the last few years. It currently has nearly \$9,000 in the account. In the past few years the board has used some Silver Bells money to solicit further funds, and to provide grants for some local festivals. In the process of granting local support funds, we discussed how festivals make use of NABBA monies and consequently drafted an application form. The last letter on Silver Bells mentions how Silver Bells funds will be used. The question is, “What do we want to do with the money?” Helen suggested asking one of the judges, perhaps one from the U.K., to run a Silver Bells workshop or master class. Workshop/master class attended could also be solicited for contributions to the fund during the session. Joe believes Helen’s proposal is good, but would require a paradigm shift. We have had long discussions at previous meetings about having judges do workshop in addition to their judging. Steve Allen reported that Gregson would have come this year, but didn’t because he wouldn’t be adjudicating. However, he could have presented a workshop, played, etc. When Helen suggested a workshop or master class held the day before the competition might work and not overtax the judge(s), Susan reminded folks that the Friday is the solo and ensemble competition, which traditionally has used all the adjudicators. Barb reported that the Development Committee had received applications but was leery of using up funds without providing ways to replenish the funds. Responding to a comment from Jim Grate, Anita suggested that a workshop or master class would be concrete for people want to see how Silver Bells funds are used. For benefit of newer board members, she recounted that we overworked Sheona White when she was here (judge, soloist, and clinician). That’s why the board is concerned about the workload for judges. Helen suggested flying a judge to the west coast following NABBA for workshop(s) at other regional sites might increase NABBA interest in the west. Barb noted that in the past the Development Committee (festival support sub-committee) has been responsible for Silver Bells. **Rico moved that we give responsibility for the Silver Bells Fund to the Development Committee (Steve Allen seconded). Motion carried.**

At 7:00 p.m. the board moved into committee sessions, with the Contest Committee remaining in the meeting room and the Development Committee meeting downstairs in the breakfast area.

Following the 2 ½ hour-long committee meetings and a short break, the board reconvened at 9:50 p.m. to hear the Initial Contest Committee report (to include section renaming discussion and vote, entry fee increase discussion and vote) and the Music Committee report.

VII. **The Contest Committee moved to rename sections to Championship, First, Second, Third, Open and Youth sections, clarifying that Youth Section bands would be comprised of no more than 40 brass players on stage at one time, plus percussion as needed.** The first four sections are basically the same, but with name changes. The Open Section is a catch-all section for comments only. This change puts up more in line with the U.K. system and will make it easier for the music committee to select repertoire. If Youth bands use standard instrumentation and numbers, they can compete in any section. Some discussion occurred about limiting the number of players for the Youth Section. Generally, the limit to 40 brass players was seen as a compromise between having no limit and requiring youth bands to conform to standard British Brass Band numbers. Youth bands can always do as other Section bands do and rotate members in and out for various pieces. **Motion carried, with two negative votes.**

**The Contest Committee recommends changing format for 2010 from test piece and own choice to one set test piece, one slow melody and one march (Championship 1, 2, 3, and Youth). The Open section would have no test piece.** Steve noted that this would be a big change for the competition, with bands not working on two mainstream pieces of the literature. That would mean spending a lot of money to compete with only one piece of substantial literature. Rusty understood Steve's point, but reported that one line of thinking is that if a band uses two substantial pieces of literature in their concert season, they can still work on them outside the contest season. Some bands would then have the chance to expand their repertoire at the quality level. Tom likes the idea and observed that adding these two different styles will mean bands would be judged on two other very different levels. Committee members clarified that the slow melody piece would NOT be a solo work and reported that the committee had discussed issue of audience appeal of test pieces. Helen suggested that with this format, the competition could include recognition of "Best March," "Best Lyrical," and "Best Test Piece" for each section. Joe reported that Randi Bulla will work on the wording and provide some examples. Joe also clarified that the committee is NOT advocating a move toward a suggested list. Steve understands how this change would appeal to the general audience. Rusty reported that the committee had discussed UK contests where bands play only one piece and are done. We would not be doing that, but would be making some changes and that can be difficult. In support of the motion, Helen said that when she is going on stage to play a great test piece she wants to be able to give everything to that test piece rather than playing two pieces back to back. Specifying a slow melody piece and a march as the other competition pieces provides for that. In addition, the Music Committee then would not have to take into account whether a band played a potential test piece as its own choice piece in recent years. Rusty knows there will be some backlash for whatever changes we make. If we get too much backlash, we can change it in Grand Rapids. Barb referenced the example of the split Championship – if the idea works, keep it; if not, don't. When Lee noted that this might improve the quality of march playing by U.S. bands, Helen observed that marches are examples in precision playing and discipline. Rusty thinks the change might also draw more bands into the competition. **Motion carried.**

**The Contest Committee recommends that NABBA increase the competition entry fee.** The increase would include a recording fee to include 35 copies for each band, one copy for the NABBA archives. The total dollar figure will depend upon the results of the RFP for recording. Randi Bulla explained the committee's rationale; stipulating 35 copies would provide one for each band member, plus increase the

integrity by discouraging unauthorized duplications. The consensus is to let bands know about the increase by November 1.

The committee also discussed the overall contest format that includes a social event on Friday night, hosted/coordinated by Tony and his group.

**VIII. Music Committee report (Joe Johnson) – Joe distributed a handout of what the music committee has been doing, including the committee’s recommended list of proposed section test pieces.**

Championship Section	–	Variations on an Enigma (Philip Sparke)	–	14:00
First Section	–	Triumphant Rhapsody (Gilbert Vinter)	–	11:30
Second Section	–	Dancerics (Kenneth Hesketh)	–	15:00
Third Section	–	Postcards from Home (Philip Wilby)	–	12:00
Youth Section	–	Dimensions (Peter Graham)	–	8:30
Open Section	–	no test piece		

Rusty commended the committee for their diligent work. **Motion carried.**

Each Section would have 10 minutes of additional playing time for the two choice selections. The Open Section would have maximum of 20 minutes of playing time. All sections would also have a combined total of 10 minutes for getting on and off stage.

President Morris reported that Teresa MacDonald would like to remain active in NABBA even though no longer a board member. She is willing to help the Development Committee continue what she began. Rusty would like the board to bestow some sort of title on her so that she can continue her communications with and recruitment of bands from Canada. Since this would be an unofficial position it requires no change in the by-laws. Rusty will ask for title suggestions tomorrow.

Rusty reviewed the schedule for Saturday morning. The Development Committee will meet at 9:00 a.m. The Contest Committee will meet at 8:00 a.m. **At 10:57 p.m., the board stood in recess until Saturday morning.**

**Saturday, September 12, 2009**

The Contest Committee met at 8:00 a.m. and the Development Committee at 9:00 a.m. to finish their committee work. At 10:00, the full board reconvened for the rest of the morning.

**IX. Full Board/Development Committee report (Steve Allen)**

- A. The proposed **Silver Bells Master Class** would be held every year with prearranged agreement with a visiting guest/judge and would include post-travel to an area under-represented in NABBA. The cost to the hosting band would be a contribution to the Silver Bells fund plus all costs associated with the workshop. Helen would serve as a liaison with the judge for schedule details. The committee suggests one master class on Friday, immediately after the S&E contest with donations taken in support of the Silver Bells Fund. Area high school directors and students, as well as other musicians would be invited. A subcommittee comprised of Steve, Helen, Anita and Barbara will work on this. Anita noted that a judge could be going to non-participating/contesting NABBA member bands in the post-competition presentations. She supports using the Silver Bells Fund monies, but also maintains that the funds must be replenished. In light of that, she suggested the following ‘formula’ as what NABBA would like to see come back into the S.B. Fund: \$100 or \$200 honorarium for the clinician, plus airfare/transport and accommodations for clinician. This would be a good way to foster NABBA in less represented areas, i.e., west coast, northwest, etc. It would also help maximize a judge’s time and impact for NABBA in

the U.S. by allowing them to spend more than two days ‘working’. Rusty asked if no non-competing bands are available, would other NABBA bands be welcome to host such events. Anita replied that it would be open to competing bands as well, but that it would be good to try to pull in the non-competing bands from far away. As in initial set-up, Helen noted that the Development Committee could work with any of the judges, but in the future they would work with the Contest committee to see that one judge would be agreeable to such presentations. Anita spoke of the need to advertise the Silver Bells fund and encourage continuing donations.

- B. **Outreach on a national level.** Steve, Theresa and Helen will work on this to get one or two band members in regular contact with Development Committee representatives. Representatives will learn about the band’s structure, etc., and will champion the bands via *The Bridge*, so people will see that NABBA is about more than the annual competition. Bands should also be reminded that every member band gets one free ad in *The Bridge* annually. Barb and Anita will work on increasing Salvation Army band membership. S.A. bands also need to know that NABBA is about more than competition. NABBA also needs to spread the word that professionals can compete and to explore the involvement of military bands. Also, if a representative or two of each band comes to NABBA, we should have an information packet to give them. Theresa is developing a master list of brass bands in America. The committee also suggests having a post-contest party with these guests and the board members to encourage their participation in NABBA. Betsy will make certain information about this is put into the program. Rusty noted regional representative are already in place, asking if they would continue even if they are not on development committee. Steve affirmed they would continue, but Charles noted that some sections are not working as well as others. Steve reported that the committee was simply trying to communicate in a more supportive and aggressive ways to members of each band, that, “We will champion you!” Helen said that the initial communication would be central, but the regional reps would still maintain their contact.
- C. The committee would like to hype **Bridge** more. Helen and Betsy will contact 4BarsRest to learn how to exploit it more fully, seeking to lift NABBA’s international profile, again to communicate that NABBA is about more than contesting. We also need more content in *Bridge*, i.e., we need to let international bands contribute. With more content, we would increase the number of issues per year. Other suggestions included: adding an agony section to ask questions, renewing the focus on youth bands, adding a focus on band camps, focusing on one NABBA band in each issue, perhaps also on one instrument as well as a studio at one university. Development is all about communication.
- D. Regarding **Sponsorship**, the committee continues to exploit current contacts, Helen with Buffet Crampon /Besson, Steve with York, etc. Theresa MacDonald has prepared excellent sponsorship materials, including one set for large donations (1,000s) and one for smaller ones (100s).
- E. The committee would like to revisit the issue of the NABBA **Website**, suggesting that NABBA sponsor a competition to develop a new NABBA website. The winning site should be designed so that either a NABBA board member or other designee could easily update the website content. The website contest winner would have to agree to sign over the rights to NABBA. Frank and Rusty know some folks that might be willing to explore the legal issues involved with this. Joe believes this should be easily resolved since many companies design websites regularly. Discussion followed about the benefit of having a NABBA member who is an attorney volunteer to donate legal advice in such situations. Richard said that for a short period of time he could probably answer any particular, focused points in question through a recently attorney friend.

F. **Vendors** – Anita and the Development Committee will work to establish contact with local and regional vendors in the Raleigh area, as well as the regional music educators’ association, etc.

President Morris observed that these were all good ideas and we just need to start implementing them. He likes the idea of the Silver Bells Master class and the subsequent interaction of the Silver Bells clinician and NABBA member bands. The committee has included a method of keeping Silver Bells funds coming in and being replenished. The regional representative idea is also a good one, providing a way for use to reach out to non-contesting bands. He then invited discussion from the rest of board in response to the Development Committee’s report. Regarding the after-contest party, in the past some have been well attended, some have not. To involve the entire board in such an event would be somewhat impossible because some board members are still working. Helen reported that Tony Granados is thinking of planning a social after the solo and ensemble competition. This would substitute for a Saturday post-competition party. Steve believes that would work, as the point is to get everyone in one room and ensure they are having a great time. Richard spoke to the benefits of including a small hook, such as free drink (beer?).

President Morris asked about the deadline and publication dates for the next issues of *The Bridge* (Oct. 1, Nov.15/Dec.15 and Feb.1/March1). Member bands should be reminded that they are entitled to one free ad each year in *The Bridge*.

Anita Cocker-Hunt reported on the **International Music Camp**, noting that the four-day summer music camp is an excellent development and outreach opportunity for NABBA.

In response to a question from Rico Belotti, Anita said that NABBA had considered having a **booth at Midwest** but had not done so because of the cost. Rico suggested that selling member band CDs at the booth might provide another perk for member bands and would be an excellent opportunity to boost NABBA’s visibility. Helen supported the idea, but acknowledged the fiscal concern. In response to her inquiry about piggy-backing with any contacts we might have at Midwest, Rusty noted that very strict rules prohibit that. Anita and Rusty will both be attending Mid-west and will try to spread the word about NABBA in more informal ways. When Jim asked how much a Mid-west booth would cost, Rusty reported the cost as \$950 for a 10x10 booth. Anita observed that the bigger problem is staffing the booth. The cost seemed reasonable to Randi Bulla in light of the exposure NABBA would receive during the four day event (Dec. 15-19 this year). Folks who are already there could be the core to staff it. Helen reminded the board that the booth must have a professional, quality appearance.

Steve opened discussion about use of electronic media, suggesting that **facebook** and other types of electronic media be used for outreach, asking if efforts spent on electronic media at this point would be at least as effective as Mid-west. Youtube could also become a useful venue. Randi voiced concern about the amount of time such efforts could consume. Steve said we could also encourage all member bands to start their own facebook presence, invite friends to join their group, and regularly share what is happening through this free venue. Betsy mentioned that other social networking sites exist. Don mentioned trying to spread the word about NABBA through other organizations as well, i.e., Midwest, MENC, NBDA. One way would be to encourage that a brass band be featured at each of these conferences, also asking whether this could also be done at the state level. Although Lee mentioned that FCBB has participated in this way, Joe asked what benefit NABBA would receive. Betsy spoke in support of such efforts as a development issue. Perhaps bands could use NABBA funds if they promote NABBA during the event.

Rusty reported on the details for **Midwest**: Set up Dec. 14/15, display Wed./Thur. 9-5, Fri 9-4, etc. Booth assignments have already been made, but Rusty thinks we could still get a booth if we wanted one. Jim

noted that the difficulty would be getting signage, a backdrop, etc. , ready in time, believing that it would be better to do proper planning for next year. Barb spoke in support of waiting until 2010. Rusty said we could then contact all NABBA member bands. Rico reminded everyone that this would provide another advantage to NABBA member bands – their CDs could be sold at the NABBA booth at Mid-west. Helen observed that some bands might not have CDs, so we might also want to have a list of bands, websites, schedules of performances, etc., to distribute to those interested in joining a brass band. Anita suggested that the brochure Theresa is developing could be inclusive and be used in many ways. Rusty asked that the Development Committee work to develop the idea for 2010, creating a list of what we need and want for such an ‘event.’ Responding to a question from Frank, he said we could show videos, however performance and mechanical rights would have to be secured first. Display of instruments would be more complicated; however he agreed with Jim that we could give away t-shirts, pens, badges, etc., of NABBA bands. **Rico moved that the Development Committee develop a budget to display/have a booth at Midwest at 2010 (Steve seconded). Motion carried.**

Lee asked about the website earlier and has volunteered to help revamp the site after the start of the new year. Rusty mentioned that Steve Walker and Jason Mountford (Music Tools Direct) have also offered to do the website at no cost. Discussion followed regarding the advantages and drawbacks of various approaches. Richard suggested redoing the website now, then later have the competition. **Steve moved that Lee begin development of the NABBA website as of January 1 and maintain that site once it goes live (Richard seconded).** Lee said he was willing to manage the website as long as he is a member and the board likes the site. Helen pointed out two aspects to the website: development and maintenance. Jim voiced the opinion that whoever designs it should maintain it. Lee said he would work off line to develop the site; we would cut over to new design when it was ready. A suggestion for a ‘members-only’ section was also offered. He also thanked Jim for his work to date on the website. **Motion carried.** Discussion of features will occur on nabbaboard.org.

Rusty reported that acquiring **percussion equipment** continues as a problem/issue at each competition site. Randi is going to make contacts and secure percussion equipment for Raleigh. Another major concern is getting the necessary equipment from the Louisville storage unit to Raleigh and back: adjudicators’ materials, banners, timing equipment, etc. We need to arrange for this, especially as we have no one from the Louisville area on the board to help facilitate it anymore. It is difficult to have a central location for the equipment. Our first consideration is to get the materials to Raleigh. Barb offered to take some, with Don perhaps taking the rest. Don suggested investigating POD storage, which might be possible, but we would need climate controlled storage, plus the transportation cost is pricy. Anita observed that the only things that need to go to Raleigh is the contest-related material. If NABBA would fund it, Don would be willing to rent a vehicle to bring everything to Raleigh. The contents of the storage unit were listed as: music scores, contest stuff (enough to fill a Dodge Caravan), plus other miscellaneous materials, probably enough for three filing cabinets (Diana’s history book, banners, old issues of Bridge and contest competitions, etc.).

Steve mentioned the need to explore the options for what we might want to do with NABBA archival material. Susan and Jim have arranged to get the scores packed up and sent to Chatfield.

- X. Noting that we already have a timeline and process in place for elections to the board, President Morris entertained discussion about **the schedule and process for nomination and election of officers.** Frank recommended that the Nominating Committee recommend a slate of nominees, including background material on candidates, to the full board 30 days prior to the Annual Meeting. Anita suggested such timing would also give the nominees a chance to address the full board about ways they might serve the

board/NABBA. Anita and Frank have agreed to continue serving on the Nominations Committee, so we need one more member. The discussion will resume after lunch.

At noon, the board stood at recess for lunch; reconvening at 12:50 p.m.

**X. Nominating Committee, continued** (Rusty Morris) The current committee consists of Anita and Frank; one additional member is required. Helen responded to Rusty's request for volunteers to serve on the Nominating Committee. There being no further discussion, **the slate was accepted by show of hands.** The slate will be in place and communicated to the board 30 days prior to the vote at the Annual meeting (Thursday evening prior to Championships), with accompanying information posted on nabbaboard.org.

**XI. Discussion on contest weekend format**

**A. Format for the weekend, including facilities.** Lee reported that the Contest Committee began looking at the schedule this morning, which brought up the S&E competition. The consensus is to keep the S&E competition this year, followed by Silver Bells workshop, followed by a block party. The committee would increase in the S&E fees: Solo - \$20, Ensemble - \$40. Saturday would be band competition day, with the entirety of the Championship section held in evening. Awards would again be announced between band performances. While he agreed that there was enough time to do so, Rusty reflected that it might not be the best solution, and may need some tweaking for prize winners because of judges' presence in the hall. Rusty suggested that any awards involving Championship band members be done at the end of the Championship competition. (Lee mentioned that in future years we might have a banquet or social event so that this would not be an issue.) Other section awards could be done throughout the evening's competition, with the S&E awards presented during the judges' interval. Some prize drawings could be drawn during competition as well. Rusty will contact Tony and inform him of Friday's schedule, i.e., when workshop will be held – from 4:00 - 5:30 per Anita. From 5:30 on is available for the social event sponsored/hosted by Tony and his crew.

**B.** Lee reported that Frank Renton and Phil Sparke have been secured as **adjudicators.** The committee talked about building a pool of adjudicators, including some persons that are great musicians and educators who might be good NABBA judges. They also discussed bringing in another UK adjudicator. Lee asked board members to send him recommendations for adjudicators. Lee agreed with Rusty's suggestion of October 31 as a deadline to have adjudicators in place. Rusty noted that this would help all facets of planning, even years in advance if we have the venue and dates secured. As soon as we are done with Raleigh we can move on to promotion and arrangements for Grand Rapids.

Jim suggested board members should make their reservations at the Raleigh Marriott City Center **now.** Facilities available for us on Friday are at the Marriott (see handouts). Discussion followed regarding details for Friday's Solo and Ensemble contest: bleed through, vendor set up (Thursday evening/Friday morning), exhibit hours (not open until after the S&E event concludes?), using University Ballroom A and C with B as a buffer, etc. It remains uncertain whether we will need both Fletcher Theatre and Meymandi the band championships, but we don't want to give either hall up until we know how many bands will compete. One drawback on Saturday is that the vendors are in the hotel and the competition is one block away.

**XII. Ern Keller** debate followed. David King contacted Rusty about getting a soloist to Australia to compete in the Ern Keller Soloist Competition. The question is how NABBA can partner with them. He suggested keeping the S&E competition for now and not using that to determine the Ern Keller participant. To

determine the soloist, he suggested we find an impartial adjudicator to listen to tape entries (\$50 entry fee), who would select three finalists for a competition during the Championship weekend, with the winner eligible to be NABBA's representative to Ern Keller. Soloists would have to be members of a NABBA band. This would add another incentive for NABBA membership. As a collegiate professor, Tom Stein would like the contest to be open to individual NABBA individuals, not necessarily only members of a NABBA band. Discussion followed primarily about benefits beyond the individual, i.e., for their band and for NABBA, but also included comments about travel and budget details. One suggestion was to cover up to \$1,000 or ½ of the plane fare, whichever is less. Although we do not need to vote on this today, Rusty believes the board does need to set firm policies, etc., before it is announced to the general membership. He would like some of the major points settled today, if possible. If we get 20 applicants, that would be \$1,000 and pay for the plane fare itself. Helen observed the unique nature of the NABBA championship weekend, i.e., that NABBA includes both band and S&E competition in same weekend. The issue is having enough time to properly run both. Anita spoke in support of all NABBA members being eligible to compete, not just NABBA band members. Discussion about the application procedure then followed. Lee suggested the following timeline. Deadline for CD submission (major work, per Ern Keller) would be sometime in the early fall. One of the Championship adjudicators would be approached with the opportunity to listen to the CDs and pick three finalists. The finalists would come to the NABBA championships and play their solo with piano accompaniment (as a showcase event) for a panel of judges. The winner would then go to the Ern Keller competition the following February. Lee also spoke in favor of opening it to any NABBA member, not just members of a NABBA band. Rusty asked if board members had any questions or reservations about the proposal. When no one offered any, Lee offered to get in touch with Dr. King about the rules, procedures, and particulars. Helen volunteered to look into what the U.K. tradition with Ern Keller has been. Rusty would like to announce this in Raleigh. Susan suggested including an article in the post-championship issue of *Bridge*. A few other issues were raised: the use of non-brass band instruments, the need to require a DVD instead of a CD, a policy for first place winner opting out, deadlines, etc. Rusty will contact Dr. King to run our ideas by him, then start drafting a set of rules, regulations and guidelines. Dr. King may be able to supply some/many of these. Ron Holz deserves some of the credit for moving the forward for NABBA. (Dr. King contacted him first and he forwarded info to Doug and Rusty.)

**XIII. Discussion on NABBA All Star Band** – Steve Walker, artistic director for Butlins contacted Rusty about bringing a NABBA group to participate in Butlins (January 2011), where more than 100 bands compete in one day. This is an incredible opportunity, with Butlins providing lodging and meals in Skegness, as well as ~ £3,000 pounds to help defray other costs. The only cost for NABBA members would be airfare. Spouses would be welcome as well. This very well-attended event would be another way for NABBA to get into the international scene. Questions remaining: 1. Is it something we want to do? 2. Is there a more appropriate name? 3. How would members be selected? 4. How about alternates? There is much to discuss. January 2011 will be here soon, and participants need plenty of lead time.

Helen believes the name is inappropriate, and expressed concern about how we choose who goes, what we do if not enough qualified persons want to go, the issues of supplementing with British players and rehearsals for the entire group, so as present the absolute best quality. Another option would be to offer the trip to one of the winning bands. There are a lot of variables to be discussed. Lee thinks a more important issue is what we want to say with this group's participation. He would like to see the group comprised of the best that the US has to offer. In thinking about this, i.e., how would this really work, more and more questions arise. We are working hard to improve how US banding is perceived and if we send less than our best and a group that has not rehearsed, if other than the best players go, we are working at cross purposes.

In reply to a question from Joe, Rusty clarified that Steve asked for some NABBA players from the US primarily to promote the movement (NABBA) in the UK. Rusty doesn't know how Steve would feel about sending over an existing band.

Helen noted that with this year's changes NABBA sections match up more closely with the UK levels. Since all section competitions are well attended, each time NABBA is invited a different section winner could be invited to be NABBA representative. This could be an incentive to get bands to compete. Don also noted that perhaps for bands on the bubble regarding participating in the competition, this might tip their decision in favor of competing. Because of the need to have more than just two days of rehearsal and in order to develop a group sound, he would not support the idea of filling in the group with UK members.

Helen put forth the name of "NABBA Ambassador Band." Rusty observed the need for guidelines to be drawn up, including the deadline for a band to accept the invitation (perhaps the January following their April win). Selected bands need to be able to follow through with commitments or offers will start drying up. He also mentioned that a logo would be designed with the band name included/changed each year. Rusty will contact Steve and see if Steve is amenable to our thought of an entire band attending, with the understanding that an existing/standing band would be a better representative of the NABBA style, etc. Rusty would like to have things in place by January 1 so bands could add that to their decision process. We also need to clarify what the band would be doing, specifically competing or not. If they would be competing, they must compete in same section as they won in the NABBA championship.

Lee, Joe, Tom volunteered to work on guidelines for Ern Keller. Rusty, Helen, and Steve will work on guidelines for the NABBA Ambassador Band. Direct any complaints about board decisions to Rusty. If persons do not agree, that is yet another reason for them to think about running for a position on the board. He has no doubt that everyone present has the absolute best future of NABBA in mind.

**Questions about festival money/support should be directed to Steve and Development Committee.**

Regarding NABBA's support of local/regional events, Barb believes one question should always be, "What does NABBA get from its support, i.e., how does NABBA benefit?" Helen further noted that monies received by a group should be put towards sustainable investment, not supper for a judge, etc. Rusty observed that there may be other ways for NABBA to support brass banding in other areas, i.e., example of Anita and Doug participating with the International and North West festivals. Richard asked if funding shouldn't be given for one time support and not an ongoing, annual gift. Rusty said that if an applicant could show that a participating band went on to attend NABBA as a competing band that may persuade NABBA to provide the grant. Barb reported that the Festival Committee had also been looking at requiring an event budget as part of application process. Helen suggested that submission of an article to *The Bridge* could be required of the successful applicants. Rusty noted our good accountability with GABBF.

**XIV. Old business** – Lee asked if the **recording of the year competition** is continuing. Rusty reported that we could, but we received no submissions last year. It does require a board member to be the point person, arrange for someone to judge entries, to create a banner, etc. It also raises the issue of what to do if we only receive one entry. Helen suggested adding a 'blurb' at bottom of each *Bridge* issue. She asked if the same people who judge the Ern Keller could also listen to/judge the submitted CDs. Rusty said some deadlines need to be put into place in order to check mechanical licenses, etc. He also noted that Timothy Holton judged the contest the first year and that we need a minimum number of submissions for the contest to be viable. Betsy suggested running the contest every so many years instead of annually. Rusty suggested scheduling the contest for Grand Rapids, with every recording since 2008 qualifying for the competition. Anita agreed that opening it up to more years would draw more entries and that the recording band be

responsible for securing all mechanical rights. Rico suggested perhaps establishing the award in the name of a former NABBA president. Rusty replied that while that might work, it requires further discussion.

## XV. New business

A. Rusty received an 8-page email from a NABBA member who raised various issues and points regarding the 2009 Championship. The board discussed the major points of the letter.

- Comment sheets were not provided for directors to fill out after the contest last year. (Only 3 out of 21 were returned the year before.) Helen suggested we could put the form on the NABBA website and send to regional representatives. Those who want to fill it out will do so.
- The location for adjudicators seating was less than ideal. With no electricity upstairs in the balcony, judges could not be relocated. And even if the seating was less than ideal, they did hear every band from the same location. We did learn from this year's experience; Raleigh will provide additional things to learn. The only real issue was the need for pipe and drape on all four sides.
- A question about what happened to the Saturday evening social event has been addressed.
- The writer expressed great displeasure with the volunteer program citing a variety of issues: not really volunteers, disorganized, etc. Several questions were asked: have we built up enough of a body of possible volunteers to do without the requirement? (Probably not.) Would it have to be four people? (It depends upon the volunteers.) Richard was a constrained volunteer and would not have chosen to volunteer. He does not think we have built up a well of volunteers over such a short period of time. Although he does not like the system, he still tends to think we should leave it in place. We could send a note to bands to send volunteers; if we don't get enough, we will have to return to constrained system. Lee suggested we call local universities and colleges and see if music service fraternities would be willing to serve as volunteers. Barb will contact local music service organizations to see if they would serve as volunteers. Volunteers would get free entry to events.
- The writer noted confusion about why NABBA was returning to rotating the location for the championship, specifically, why NABBA left IUS. Reasons included: some miscommunication and misunderstandings, bands wanting a variety of venue, some promises didn't come through.
- Has the board considered a method of relegation or promotion of bands, rate/place into sections, etc.? Rusty thinks that self-regulation seems best for now. Helen noted that we are at least now regulating sections, a step in right direction.
- The 60/40 point divide was also mentioned. Discussion followed whether the new format may take care of this, i.e., the distribution may be changed to 70/15/15. "Best March," Best Slow Melody," Best Test Piece" for each section will simply be announced, with no plaque or trophy. Lee thinks adding best instrumentalist/soloist might be another good idea and doesn't cost NABBA anything. He advocates only mentioning a 'Best March' etc., if the section has two or more bands. Instrumentalists could be mentioned regardless. **Steve moved that we mention Best March and Best Slow Melody where two or more bands compete in a section and Best Instrumentalist in each category regardless of number of bands competing. (seconded) Motion carried.**

Discussion about the new format and the point distribution followed: 80/10/10 vs. 70/15/15, what are we trying to accomplish, how to emphasize the importance of the test piece, even 'easy' pieces have their challenges. And if that is true, isn't that worth more than 10 points each? Does replacing own choice(s) with a march and a lyric piece, then scoring that at 80/10/10 diminish the value of those pieces? Would a 70/15/15 divide be preferred? How about 60/20/20 (15 minutes test, plus 2 five minute pieces)? The majority of the members are okay with changing the format and scoring in same year. **Lee moved that the new scoring system include a set test piece at**

**70% with the march and the lyrical piece counting 15% each (Tom Stein seconded). Motion carried.**

- The April board meeting is not a secret event. It is open and always has been. The writer also asked when financial details would be made public. Tom suggested that an agenda be posted prior to meetings, perhaps by one week ahead.
- Percussion equipment for the championships (type, availability, etc.) continues as an issue, primarily with the larger items like tympani.

Don was struck by the fact that the writer was unaware that the board had discussed many of these issues prior to the weekend. Rusty reported that we have not generally heard this from others, although one other person has voiced some complaints, but again, nothing we haven't already tried to address.

- B. Rusty encouraged everyone to participate on NABBAboard.org regularly. While we don't have to solve every issue at the same time, keeping activity going keeps us all thinking forward.
- C. Location of next September's meeting (Jim Grate) – Traditionally the board has met at the site of the next Championship. Grand Rapids seems to be consensus for the 2010 September meeting. The April 2010 meeting (Raleigh) will include presentations for 2012 and 2013 contests. The next fall meeting will be September 10/11, 2010 at the Amway Plaza Hotel in Grand Rapids. If the date of the meeting needs to be changed, it will be moved to September 17/18.
- D. Don reported that he kept hearing complaints about the price of ticketing for non-NABBA members to attend any of the events, that thirty dollars does seem a bit much. He would like to see NABBA come up with single event tickets. Discussion followed about various particulars: grandparents attending for only one solo, examples of all other conference requiring payment for spouse to attend, whether it is necessary to charge admission to the solo and ensemble competition, charging a flat fee of \$20 for the entire day of band competition, charging a flat fee of \$1,500 per band entry, the role of individual NABBA memberships, the idea of affiliate memberships for individuals not part of a NABBA competing band, etc. Barb supports keeping things as is, but not charging for attending the S&E performances. Band competition day would remain the same; one must either become a NABBA member or buy a ticket at the door.

Tom Stein moved for adjournment. President Morris declared the meeting adjourned at 3:54 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Susan K. Henthorn, NABBA Secretary