

# THE ROCKVILLE COMMUNITY CHORUS

## POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

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## POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### Introduction

Welcome to the Rockville Community Chorus (RCC)!

Since 1967, the RCC has provided an opportunity for individuals to sing together and provide entertainment for the community. As a mixed choral group composed of adult volunteers, the Chorus performs a number of free concerts for the community. It also performs for other organizations throughout the year.

The City of Rockville sponsors the Chorus and provides:

- 1) salaries for the Music Director and Accompanist;
- 2) rehearsal and performance facilities;
- 3) music storage.

The city also subsidizes promotional efforts, such as music, advertising, mailings and publicity. Expenses beyond those covered by the city are absorbed by the Chorus from funds derived from membership dues and donations from Chorus supporters.

The Music Director and the Accompanist are selected by the City of Rockville and a committee of Chorus representatives, with input from the Chorus.

The purpose of these Policies and Procedures (P&P) is to provide basic guidance concerning the day-to-day activities of the Chorus. It sets out the policies and procedures to promote the smooth operation of the Chorus and to guide the conduct of its affairs in line with the Bylaws. Where appropriate, coverage has been included to describe how certain Chorus events take place and how the Board of Directors or a Committee carries out particular functions.

The P&P includes guidelines addressing a variety of Chorus issues including Recruitment and Auditions, Rehearsals and Performance Scheduling, Membership, Attendance Etiquette, Program Format, and Expenditures, Selection and Evaluation of Director and Accompanist. For a more complete listing of topics, see the Index. The P&P may be expanded, from time to time, to cover other items as the need arises. Also included are brief outlines of the duties of each member of the Board and a summary of Committee functions.

Each Chorus member receives a copy of the P&P so that he or she may become familiar with RCC operations.

## **Recruitment and Auditions**

### **Recruitment**

Membership is open to all adults who desire to sing and who successfully audition with the Music Director.

At the beginning of each semester, the City of Rockville will place announcements in the City media (Rockville Reports, etc.) to advertise for new members as needed. The Chorus Publicists may use other media (newspapers, radio, etc.) to seek new members when requested by the Board of Directors. Announcements about membership may be made during the concerts and may be printed in the concert programs.

### **Membership Auditions**

Prospective chorus members are required to audition for membership. Although sight reading ability is useful, it is not required. New member auditions are normally scheduled at the beginning of each "semester."

Current members may be asked to re-audition periodically for the purpose of voice placement and overall choral balance.

### **Auditions for Solo Program Parts**

When the Music Director has a requirement for a solo part, members will be given an opportunity to audition before guest soloists are invited to audition.

When a musical selection requires more than one pianist or additional instrumentalist(s), the Music Director will confer with the Chorus Accompanist and the Board of Directors in selecting the additional instrumentalist(s). Any member may audition.

### **Auditions for Solo Pieces**

At times, performance programs include opportunity for individual solo or small group numbers. In those cases, the Music Director will announce the suggested theme to the chorus, generally by the fourth rehearsal of the season. Those interested will be asked to identify the music they plan to perform. The Soloist Selection Committee will set time, place and order of auditions. The individuals and groups auditioning should be prepared to perform the entire piece at the audition. Individuals or groups that are auditioning are responsible for their own preparation. If they wish to rehearse prior to the audition, using the chorus accompanist, they should make their own arrangements with the accompanist.

The Chorus Accompanist will provide accompaniment for the auditions, and for performances if requested. If those intending to audition plan to use the Chorus Accompanist for their audition they should provide him or her copy of the music well in advance.

Those auditioning will generally be advised of results within five days.

## **The Rockville Singers (The Outreach Group)**

During 1999, the Chorus organized an outreach group (The Rockville Singers). The group ranges from some 20 to 32 members (mixed voices). Membership in the outreach group is open to all chorus members, although a separate audition for the outreach group is required.

The group maintains a current, but varied repertoire, and can perform for organizations and at venues that would not be appropriate for the RCC at large.

### **Rehearsals and Performance Scheduling**

Rehearsals are held on Monday nights from 7:30 - 9:30 p.m. at the Rockville Senior Center, 1150 Carnation Drive, Rockville, Maryland. A 15 minute social break is included during rehearsal. The Music Director has the option of extending the rehearsal time or scheduling additional rehearsals, as needed, with prior notification. Note: Typically, the outreach group rehearses before the main Monday night rehearsal, usually beginning at 6:45. The outreach group generally rehearses during the summer months as well, generally on a bi-weekly basis.

Cancellation of rehearsals for reasons such as inclement weather is in line with the Montgomery County School closing criteria. Members can call the telephone number listed in the roster for up-to-date information.

The normal Chorus year runs from September through May and consists of two seasons: fall, from September through December, and spring, from January through May, each culminating in concert performances. The Chorus performs a principal concert each season in the F. Scott Fitzgerald Theatre. Other major concerts may be performed for the city, community organizations, nursing homes, and other groups as arranged by the Chorus.

Other performances may be arranged by the Board for smaller groups when the entire Chorus cannot perform. Members may suggest locations to the Vice President for other possible performances. Criteria considered in selecting locations for other performances include:

- Date, time, and location are suitable for members, Director and Accompanist.
- Audience size should be greater than the Chorus membership.
- The performance facilities should include a tuned piano, risers and a microphone.
- Performances out of doors should have appropriate equipment (instruments sound amplification, risers, lighting, etc.)

## **Membership**

### ***Member Definition***

A member is a person who has auditioned successfully with the Rockville Chorus Director and agrees to abide by the Rockville Chorus "Bylaws" and the "Policies and Procedures". Note: Membership is open to all adults (18 and older) who enjoy singing with a group and entertaining the community.

### ***Member Financial Responsibilities***

Dues for the Rockville Chorus members are \$50 per each semester (\$60 for Rockville Singers). Dues are payable to the "Rockville Chorus" via the Rockville Chorus Board Treasurer on or before the third rehearsal of each semester.

If the Rockville Chorus membership fee is a hardship for any selected member, that member can request a total or partial waiver of fees (or, in certain cases, refund of dues). This request should be directed to the Chorus Board President and Treasurer and will be handled in strict confidence. If a member leaves during the semester/season for which dues have been paid, no refund will be given. Note: Membership dues typically only cover the cost of music purchased for the same semester/season in which the dues were paid.

### ***Member Participation Responsibilities***

Membership in the Rockville Chorus is a privilege that carries over from semester to semester based on the member's interest and ability to:

- maintain vocal musical abilities;
- meet all fiscal responsibilities;
- conform to required attendance guidelines;
- exhibit appropriate concert attire;
- demonstrate appropriate behavior at all rehearsals, concerts and social events; and
- comply with policies and procedures adopted to make membership healthful and enjoyable for all members.

If a member fails to carry out his/her responsibilities, the Director (in case of musical issues) or the President may counsel the member on needed corrective actions, establish a reasonable time frame for the corrective actions, and monitor the member's efforts. These initial efforts will be undertaken discretely.

If the member refuses to take corrective actions, or if his/her efforts are ineffective, the President, with the concurrence by the Board and the Director, may suspend the individual's membership for the remainder of the performance year. Any individual who is suspended under this policy may reapply for membership of the following performance year (September) by re-auditioning and affirming his/her willingness to comply with all Rockville Chorus policies.

[This provision amended by Board on May 15, 2006.]

## Attendance

To insure quality performances, it is important that the chorus is well rehearsed as a unit. Therefore, each member of the Chorus should make a dedicated effort to attend all of the rehearsals.

To perform in a major concert, members must attend scheduled rehearsals and the dress rehearsal. Absence from four or more regularly scheduled rehearsals in any given semester is grounds for disqualification from participating in the performance. The Music Director, on the basis of his or her assessment of that member's level of preparation, and, in consultation with the Board, may permit the member to perform.

Section Representatives maintain attendance records. Whenever possible, each member should notify his/her Section Representative if he/she must miss a rehearsal or will be unable to participate in a performance.

## Etiquette

All members should be quiet and attentive during rehearsals. The mid-rehearsal break provides opportunity for socializing with other chorus members.

## **PERFORMANCE ATTIRE (amended 8/11/2009)**

Members are responsible for providing their own attire, which is to be purchased through, or in conjunction with, the Chorus wardrobe committee. Formal performance attire for the Spring and Fall concerts are:

For women:

- A white, long sleeve, flat collar, pleated front, tuxedo blouse.
- A black, A-line, easy care, ankle length skirt, and black cummerbund.
- Black shoes, off black hosiery
- Pearls for the Spring Concert

For men:

- A single-breasted black tuxedo (5 pieces: pants, jacket, white pleated front shirt, black cummerbund & black bow tie).

Supplied:

- The chorus will supply accessories as necessary to ensure a uniform appearance.

Informal performance attire for both men and women.

The director will determine when informal attire is appropriate.

- Dark blue, short sleeve, shirt with Rockville Chorus logo.
- Khaki bottoms (shorts, pants, skirts).

If a member has any difficulty with these requirements, please consult the Member at Large .

All members are asked to refrain from using perfume, cologne, scented hair spray, after-shave lotion, or other scents during rehearsals and performances. **[Note: This rule addresses health issues]**

Noticeable jewelry should not be worn during performances. Audible alarms on wristwatches, beepers, and pagers should be turned off (or left home) during performances.

### **Board of Directors**

This section provides a very general summary of the responsibilities of each Board Member.

The President coordinates the activities of the Board, calls and presides at Board meetings, appoints committees and committee chairpersons, has the authority to issue checks in the absence of the Treasurer, and is an ex-officio member of committees.

The Vice-President presides over meetings or at other events in the absence of the President, chairs the Concert Committee, and performs other responsibilities as designated by the President. The Vice-President succeeds the President in the event the President is unable to continue in that office.

The Secretary keeps minutes of all membership and Board meetings and is responsible for official correspondence as required. In the absence of the Secretary, the President shall make arrangements for the recording of the minutes.

The Treasurer keeps an accurate record of all receipts and disbursements, issues checks, maintains the checkbook, oversees development and revision of budgets, collects membership dues, prepares and distributes quarterly financial reports to the Board, and makes such reports available to the Membership.

The Member-at-Large coordinates the Section Representatives and communicates their reports to the Board, serves as liaison between the membership and the Board, prepares and distributes a membership roster, and maintains membership attendance record.

The Co-Librarians catalog, distribute, and collect all music; re-file it at the end of each season; keep a record of issued music; coordinate with the Music Director for the ordering, labeling and numbering of music; and, coordinate with the Treasurer in issuing music to members who have paid their dues.

The Co-Publicists chair the Publicity Committee and coordinate publicity efforts for both the chorus and the Singers with the City of Rockville, the Music Director and the Board.

The Singers Liaison serves as general coordinator of the activities of the Singers with those of the chorus.

The Music Director is responsible for developing the performance programs, selecting music, auditioning new members, and directing the Chorus rehearsals and performances.

The Immediate Past President will act as a resource to the current President.

### **Committees**

All members are encouraged to serve on at least one committee as defined in the Bylaws. Members may select the committee(s) on which they wish to serve.

Chairpersons are responsible for reporting committee activities to the Board.

Committees of the Chorus generally include: Nomination, Concert, Publicity, Social, Wardrobe, and Historical. Their duties are outlined below:

The Nomination Committee shall develop a slate of candidates for the Board of Directors and oversee the elections. In developing the slate of candidates for the May election, the Nomination Committee is to announce to the chorus at large that a slate is being prepared and ask if any members are interested in serving. The list of candidates presented to the Board will include the names of those who have expressed an interest in serving.

The Concert Committee shall schedule concerts, and oversee all aspects of performances (lighting, recording, ushers, piano tuning, etc.) for performances other than those that are city-sponsored.

The Publicity Committee shall prepare media announcements, concert programs, fliers, and invitations in coordination with the City of Rockville and shall maintain a current mailing list of patrons.

The Social Committee shall coordinate post concert refreshments and recreational functions.

The Wardrobe Committee shall develop wardrobe standards for approval by the Board and obtain, maintain and store garments as needed.

The Historical Committee shall maintain a historical record of the Chorus and its activities.

The Board may create ad hoc committees as needed.

The Soloist Selection Committee, an ad hoc Committee, is chaired by the Music Director and includes at least one member of the board and one member from each of the chorus sections. This committee auditions and selects soloists for the individual solo pieces.

### **Program Format and Music Selection**

#### **Format**

The Rockville Community Chorus strives to perform a variety of quality music that will serve both choristers and the community. In an effort to compile diverse concert programs, it is the intention of the Chorus to endeavor to be inclusive of all musical styles and genres based on musical merit.

The Chorus performs a varied repertoire. To ensure such a variety, the program format for each concert should include at least two of the following categories of music:

- American
- Broadway show tunes and other popular music
- Classical and other period pieces
- Contemporary selections
- Folk music
- Jazz and Blues
- Patriotic music
- Spirituals and gospel music
- Traditional and Popular festival and holiday music

Other categories may be included.

The program may be structured to provide for small voice groups, solos, instrumentals, and transitional movements, special selections by the Accompanist or Music Director, and other components.

#### **Music Selection**

Recognizing that no concert program will please everyone, concert repertoire is selected by the Director with guidance and approval from the Board of Directors. Every attempt is made to select works that will challenge and broaden musical experiences. Choristers who have concerns or suggestions concerning programming and program selection are strongly encouraged to contact the Director or a Board of Directors member.

The Director will propose a program to the Board at a Board meeting prior to the beginning of each season. The Board will review the proposed program, and, if necessary, discuss changes. Once the program is approved, the Director will provide an overview of the concert program to the Chorus at large at the start of each semester.

If a Music Director has not been installed before the season begins, the Board will appoint an ad hoc committee to develop a proposed music program. After being installed, the Director may suggest revisions to the program.

The Chorus will be surveyed at least once a year for their views including their suggestions for music. Suggestions received from the members will be made available

to the Director before the start of the next semester.

It is desirable for the Chorus, and/or the Singers, to develop and maintain a "ready" repertoire for ad hoc concerts.

### **Revenues and Expenditures**

The Board has responsibility for financial decisions.

Financial activities of the Chorus will be reflected in a financial report which will be made available by the Board to the members by October 31.

Sources of revenue include membership dues, individual and corporate donations, and financial support from the City of Rockville.

At present, funding is provided by both the City and the Chorus treasury. The funding includes:

#### **City**

- Director and Accompanist salaries;
- Administrative assistance by City staff;
- Rehearsal and performance facilities;
- Technical assistance for stage productions;
- Advertising in City publications and press releases to area media;
- Mailings to members and patrons;
- Reproduction of Board meeting minutes, membership rosters, and other Chorus materials
- An annual allowance for program and music supplies.

#### **Chorus Treasury**

- purchase of new music;
- advertising for performance and audition dates;
- reimbursement to members for previous Board approved personal expenses for Chorus needs, other than normal operating expenses;
- special compensation for Accompanist and Director for extra concerts (Board approval);
- performance attire (currently ties, ribbons);
- music supplies such as music holders and folders;
- guest musicians (preferably with membership approval).

In cases where expenditures arise that are considered extraordinary, regardless of monetary value, they will be presented to the members for approval.

### **Selection and Evaluation of Director and Accompanist**

The Music Director and the Accompanist of the Rockville Community Chorus are under

contract with the City of Rockville, Department of Recreation and Parks, Arts Division. Each contract stipulates a designated salary and a term for employment. The contracts are renewable annually, usually on July 1. An evaluation of the Director and Accompanist will be made by the Chorus membership prior to the spring concert. The Board of Directors, in conjunction with the membership evaluation, will make a recommendation regarding renewal of the contracts to the Arts Division representative by July 1.

Should the position of Music Director or Accompanist become vacant, the vacancy will be advertised in accordance with procedures of the City of Rockville and in conjunction with advertising efforts by the Chorus.

### **Procedures for Selection and Evaluation of Director and Accompanist**

Selection: Prospective candidates are required to submit their resumes to the City.

An ad hoc selection committee consisting of 3 Chorus members (at least one of whom is a current officer of the Board) and the Arts Division representative will review the resumes and select the best qualified candidates to be interviewed.

The selection committee will interview the selected applicants who will also audition for the chorus at large. After all selected applicants have interviewed with the selection committee and auditioned, chorus members will vote for their preference by secret ballot. The selection committee will make a recommendation to the Arts Division representative based upon the interview and the membership vote.

The Arts Division representative will consider the recommendation of the selection committee and the membership evaluation in making a final decision.

In the event that no clear decision can be made, a second audition will take place.

### **Evaluation**

The evaluation instrument for the Director and Accompanist will be presented to the individual Chorus members for their confidential evaluation at a regular rehearsal. The evaluations will be collected and tallied by the Board of Directors.

In a closed session, the Board will review the collected evaluations of the Director and Accompanist and discuss the findings. Based upon the Board's discussion and the membership evaluations, the Board will make a recommendation in writing to the Arts Division representative for renewal of the contracts. A summary of the evaluation will be provided to the Director and Accompanist. The individual evaluations will be made available to the Arts Division representative. The Board will retain a copy of the evaluation results and recommendations.

The Arts Division representative will decide the course of action and notify the Director and Accompanist of the decision.

Upon notification of the decision by the Arts Division representative, the President of the Chorus will inform the membership of the result.

### **Amendments**

These Policies and Procedures can be amended at any Board meeting by a majority vote of the Board as defined in the Bylaws.

Suggestions for amendments to the Policies and Procedures can be submitted at any time in writing to the Board and signed by at least three Chorus members. The proposed amendment must be presented in time to be included in the agenda for the next Board meeting. If the Board feels it necessary, it may waive the time requirement.

The proposed amendment will be reviewed by the Board, and a written response on its disposition will be provided to the proponent.

When needed, the Board may discuss any matter with the Chorus.