



Suzuki Association of Ontario

Annual General Meeting Minutes

Sunday, November 15, 2020 1:00PM

Via zoom

Meeting ID: 745 617 7661

Password: 4721749 <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7456177661?pwd=dzVoeEdVZ0FzMVZk3Qm9MNzZlRG50dz09>

1. Welcome and Call to Order at 1:13 pm.

Motion 2019: Myra Yeung moves to call meeting to order. Rebecca Ashworth seconds the motions. Carried.

“The mission of the Suzuki Association of Ontario is to promote and support the Suzuki Method of learning by nurturing excellence in education”.

Land acknowledgement:

We acknowledge that in this meeting today we are spread out across the treaty lands that make up Ontario, a name given to this region by Iroquois peoples to mean “beautiful lake”. We recognize a history that predates the establishment of the earliest European colonies. We acknowledge this territory’s significance for the Indigenous Peoples who lived, and continue to live, upon it - and whose practices and spiritualities were tied to the land and continue to develop in relationship to the territory and its other inhabitants today. We are grateful to have the opportunity to work and teach in the communities that have grown in the treaty lands of the Indigenous Peoples, including but not limited to Anishinaabek, Haudenosaunee, Metis, Iroquois, Mississaugas, Wendat, Leni-Lunaape, the Nipissing and the Hiawatga. We acknowledge that all of us are treaty people and we accept our responsibility to honour all our relations.

We pay tribute to the legacy of all First Peoples of Canada, as we strive to strengthen ties with the communities we serve and build the future through our teaching work with children. We honour all the First Nation, Métis and Inuit people who have been living on the land since time immemorial.

2. Record of Attendance and proxies

presented by Claire Motyer

3. Your SAO Board Members

Presented by Lenni Jabour

4. Approval of the agenda for November 15, 2020

Motion 2020: Rachel Gauntlett moves to approve the agenda. Susan Barak Seconds the motion. Carried

5. Approval of the 2019 AGM minutes (attached)

Motion 2021: Anita Buttemer moves to approve the 2019 AGM minutes. Ellen Berry Seconds the motion. Carried.

6. Reports:

- a) Report from the Chair, Lenni Jabour (as submitted to the record)
- b) Report from Vice-Chair, Debbie Hammond (as submitted to the record)
- c) Report from Treasurer, Kate Einarson

2020 conference: Net revenue from the Guelph conference was \$5734; this was the first time the SAO Board had taken an active role in conference finances, so the accounts were less separated than previous years. No lump sum deposit given to the 2020 conference team due to the postponement.

2020 scholarships: 3 teacher scholarships and 2 cross-studio bursaries awarded last fall, with 8 of our brand new “mini-scholarships” awarded this summer for online SAA training. Due to pandemic restrictions, no travel awards for Board meetings or conferences have been paid out in 2020.

SAO Banking: Financial activity is now completely through Meridian, although COVID-19 has delayed the closing of our inactive BMO account. Two cashable, escalating-rate GICs were purchased in late 2019. All Meridian accounts are one-to-sign, which enables e-transfers and online banking. Online banking records will inform the drafting of our first operating budget in 2020-2021.

Financial snapshot: position as of today is \$33 983.49, not including interest on the GICs that has accrued but not been paid. Meridian chequing and savings are \$13983.49, Meridian GICs have a face value of \$20 000, and the balance at BMO is \$0.

Summary of 2017-2020: During my term as treasurer I have worked with the Executive on transformational projects and professionalization initiatives that unfolded over multiple years. I hope these changes will ensure the long-term financial health of the SAO. To briefly summarize:

New services: moved to our own Quickbooks account via QB Online; transition from BMO (bank, two-to-sign) to Meridian (credit union, one-to-sign); new online banking and electronic statements; new GICs purchased; use of Eventbrite for registration and tracking; took ownership of our web domain and moved to SAO-owned GoDaddy web hosting account; launch of new Book 1 teacher development award; creation of mini-scholarships for online learning; first online event for members.

New abilities: accept Interac e-transfers, accept PayPal, online membership renewal, online receipts for payments; online scholarship application and tracking; Board members can attend digitally instead of travelling in person - this turned out to be essential during the pandemic; we are now holding our first digital AGM;

New professionals: registered SAO’s trade name and obtained Master Business License; administrator now has an annual contract and review process, and invoices for services; new accountant, with guaranteed flat rate for three-year term; new web developer for site maintenance and security; new bookkeeper for as-needed support with records;

New processes: updated provincial Form 1; SAO transacts business from a mailing address not linked to any individual Board member; Board now partners with conference team on finances

and oversight; Board members have completed NFP governance training; Executive have instituted an annual review of Board terms and service limits; annual process to review and increase membership/registration fees and advertising rates sustainably; and finally, work has begun on initial operating budget to inform strategic planning

d) Report from Administrator, Claire Motyer

Claire took on the position of administrator on April 1, 2020 from Fanny Martin.

Membership renewals took place through our website. Membership update as of today:

- a. 97 total members including 87 active members. 42 Individual teachers, 6 schools with 44 group teachers, 1 new teacher, 4 subscribing members.
- b. Last fiscal year 124 members in total and 113 at the time of the last AGM.
- c. We expect that due to COVID-19 and some issues with the website during this year's renewal process, this might have caused the lower membership renewal numbers. The Board and I have been doing outreach to past members and have seen this number rising. I expect that we will fill the numbers with late renewals.

Claire collaborated with SAO Chair Lenni Jabour and Ever Hobbes on our website update.

Claire worked with SAO treasurer Kate Einarson and bookkeeper Janis Hobson to sort out the SAO books.

Claire supported SAO Vice Chair Debbie Hammond with COVID-19 information night event.

We have moved to using Eventbrite for RSVPs for our first online AGM.

e) Reports from Area Representatives (as submitted to the record)

6. SAO Annual Conference

update for 2020/2021 presented by Karen Kimmett

Due to Covid-19 our conference was postponed. Appreciated the quick response for the SAO executive. Lenni did need to consult with the SAA as we are a chapter affiliate to be able to postpone our conference. Conference committee will meet later this month about whether 2021's conference will be virtual or will be in person. This decision will be made by January 2021 and they will let the SAO board know.

Gail Lange will speak to us later in this meeting about the Canadian newsletter and a current Covid19 survey for teachers to know about what teacher needs exist in Canada during this difficult time.

- 7. Overview of Financial Statements for fiscal period ending August 31, 2020** (attached)
presented by Kate Einarson

Motion 2022: Anita Buttemer motions to approve the financial statement as presented by Kate Einarson. Jeremy Viinalass Seconds. Carried.

- 8. Appointment of the accountant for 2020-2021**
presented by Kate Einarson

Motion 2023: Rebecca Ashworth motions to approve the appointment of Sam Marinucci as accountant for 2020-2021. Laura Nerenberg Seconds. Carried.

9. Report of the Nominating Committee

(Carmen Evans, Lenni Jabour, Debbie Hammond, Myra Yeung) presented by Debbie Hammond
Met on June 24, 2020. We realized in the spring we had a fair number of people coming to the end of their term and coming to the end of their term limit. We met some challenges in finding new members during Covid19. Nominating committee is pleased to secure volunteers to run for this years slated board.

Laura Nerenberg asks the maximum number of years in the term. Area representatives are a 3 year term with a 10-year maximum.

Open SAO Board positions:

- Vice-Chair
- 807 Area Representative
- 705 Area Representative

Please see our Board Role descriptions and fillable nomination form (attached)

10. Election of Directors to Board of Directors (see table on page 2)

Motion 2024: Wendy Seravalle-Smith moves to approve the board slate as presented. Paule Barsalou seconds.

11. Other Business

A. Canadian newsletter announcement presented by Gail Lange

The Canadian e-newsletter was created through Canadians getting together at SAA conferences and arranging to have breakfast or coffee together. We decided to stay together through the year with e-newsletters. There is a committee of 5 people who originally had conference calls and now meet over Zoom. Every province has a representative on the newsletter. Margot Jewell is the Ontario representative to the newsletter. We also have a representative from the Yukon who was originally from Ontario, Katie Avery.

Rob Richardson enlisted new members from the committee to ensure we have representation from all provinces.

The newsletter is found at <http://www.canadiansuzukinewsletter.org/index.html>

If you have not been receiving invitations to Zoom invitations please email Gail Lange or Margot Jewell or suzukimusiccanada@gmail.com

The newsletter is published by the Suzuki Association of the Americas.

As part of the newsletter is a list of all the courses being offered by Canadian trainers. It also includes a place to request courses that you need. This assists with training opportunities throughout the year in addition to Institute offerings.

The Canadian newsletter is bilingual in both french and english to help represent our francophone Canadian Suzuki teachers.

B. Strategic Planning committee presented by Debbie Hammond

Thank you to the members of the executive team who have been working through a difficult situation to update and modernize everything about the SAO organization. We are now on firm ground financially and organizationally to move forward towards a new Strategic Plan.

We are looking for volunteers for this committee. Contact Claire at suzukiontario@gmail.com to participate in this committee.

C. COVID-19's impact on teaching studios across Ontario

Lenni Jabour presented about our first ever SAO online event about guidelines for safe studio operation. The SAO hopes to hold more mini online events like this in the future. Megan Smith shared with us an English screening questionnaire. http://www.ottawapublichealth.ca/en/public-health-topics/resources/Documents/COVID-19_Employee_Screening_Questionnaire_EN.pdf

D. SAO's [Statement on Racial Injustice and Exclusion](#) and [anti-racism resource list](#)

In early June, the members of the SAO executive felt compelled to share a response to racial injustice, and systemic barriers within the Suzuki music

community. We had help assembling a list of resources that we have shared with our membership. The list of resources can be found in our website, and is considered to be a living list. You can see our statement in the AGM package. I know that we all share the belief that every child can, as well as a shared commitment to life-long learning.

A next step that the SAO Executive has planned, is a session for the 2020-2021 SAO Board with Marva Wisdom. This session will be held In advance of the Strategic planning that we plan to begin again this upcoming year.

Marva Wisdom's session is titled 'the inclusionary mindset: what is it and how does it relate to awareness and understanding of systemic racism.

The outcomes of this session will be: 1. Increased understanding and awareness of systemic racism - what is the fuss about?

2. Surfaces promising practices in inclusion and belonging with [Marva's] colleagues and clients

3. Participant's reflections - what is my privilege and what does activating it look like for me?

A Senior Fellow at the Munk School of Global Affairs and Public Policy, Marva Wisdom is a leading voice on empowering social change and has been advocating for social justice and inclusivity for decades. Her service delivery includes keynote speeches, engagement facilitation and design, and research. Marva has been a driving force as Director of Outreach and Engagement behind the well received [Black Experience Project](#) (GTA) - a seven-year research study. She is the director of the [ArtsEverywhere Festival](#), co-presented by Eramosa Institute and Musagetes Foundation in partnership with the U of G.

And she is the external Lead Advisor for the City of Guelph's long-term Community Plan that is committed to setting a standard for the elimination of systemic racism.

Among Marva's more than 30 years of volunteer leadership is her role as past founding president of Guelph Black Heritage Society, Chair of United Way Campaign, Rotary Guelph and Chair of the YMCA-YWCA Board

This session continues our commitment to Board training and we feel this will benefit our community at large as our Board members can take what they learn into their own communities. A session like this is a first step, but I think it will be incredibly valuable to our organisation. If we know we have a common understanding of inclusivity, I believe that strategic planning will be much more successful–Inclusion won't be an added thing we tack on, but will permeate our planning throughout.

- E. Thank you to outgoing Board members Jodie Campeau, Kate Einarson, Carmen Evans presented by Lenni Jabour
- F. Thank you to the Board of Directors for their renewed commitment presented by Lenni Jabour

Comments and Announcements

Question for Gail Lange: Is the Suzuki Canada Facebook page a good place to connect with Suzuki teachers in Canada? Gail responded that she is unsure if it is being used as she is not often on facebook. Directed back to Laura Nerenberg who had the comment. Gail is going to look further into this and asks we will all go look at the newsletter website. Newsletter will be out in the middle of January.

Paule Barsalou commented that there is also a Canada Page on the SAA website.
<http://suzukiassociation.org/canada/>

12. Adjournment

Motion 2025: Laura Nerenberg motions to Adjourn meeting at 2:20 pm. Kelly Williamson Seconds.

SAO Board of Directors for 2020-2021

| Directors | Name | 2020-2021 | Voting member |
|-----------------------------|------------------------|---|---------------|
| Past-Chair | Lenni Jabour | one-year term, 2020 | yes |
| Chair | Debbie Hammond | term starting 2020 | yes |
| Vice-Chair | | | |
| Secretary | Liz Biswas | current term | yes |
| Treasurer | Geneviève Schirm-Joyce | nominated | yes |
| Member-at-Large | Janice Mah | nominated, currently serving as interim | yes |
| Member-at-Large | Kiete Gularte | nominated | yes |
| New-Teacher-Member-at-Large | Myra Yeung | current term | yes |
| Administrative Assistant | Claire Motyer | --- | n/a |
| Area Representatives | | | |
| 416 Area | Maya Chilton | nominated, currently serving as interim | yes |
| 519 Area | Andrea Cook | current term | yes |

| | | | |
|-------------------|------------------|---|-----|
| 613 East Area | Laura Nerenberg | current term | yes |
| 519 West Area | Rebecca Ashworth | nominated, currently serving as interim | yes |
| 705 and 807 Areas | | | |
| 905 Area South | Mary Burke | current term | yes |
| 905 Area North | Susan Beth Barak | current term | yes |

Annual Chair Report - Lenni Jabour

Much has happened since our last AGM in November 2019. The pandemic's devastating effect has also provided a new lens with which to see growth, change and hope. Over the course of the year, it was my goal as Chair to remain focused and positive while engaging with the greater Suzuki community and colleagues here at home. The SAO has undergone many excellent developments over this year, and I am pleased to report them below.

NEW HIRE

Our former Administrator Fanny resigned in January 2020, and I worked closely with Carmen Evans as the SAO's hiring committee. Together, Carmen and I reviewed twenty-six applications, interviewed six candidates for our Administrator role, and were ultimately delighted to offer the role to current Administrator Claire Motyer to begin April 1. Working closely with Claire over the rest of Spring to successfully onboard included creating a highly detailed SAO Administrator's guide that outlines all tasks, passwords, contact info, dates and deadlines. This document lives on the SAO's Google drive and may be edited and refined over time by subsequent Executive teams.

MEETINGS

I led monthly "check-in" meetings with the Executive, during which we strategized and collaborated on our continued efforts in making the SAO a forward-thinking organization that supports members, contributes to the greater Suzuki community with leadership, and remains focused on Dr. Suzuki's vision. Our two FBMs and EBMs were positive, action-oriented and well-attended with all four meetings reaching quorum.

ORGANIZATIONAL STEWARDSHIP

Along with the Administrator's guide mentioned above, I created several new organizational documents for the SAO over this year:

- A Board member agreement for all new SAO Board members
- A document that clearly outlines SAO [Board Roles](#)
- A [Board Member nomination form](#) that may be submitted for consideration by any member interested in joining the SAO Board
- A [Project Proposal form](#) for any SAO member who has a task, learning opportunity or event idea for which they wish Executive support

I created these forms as part of a larger organizing process for the SAO, in which members may submit their intentions and ideas efficiently and with effective follow-up - the purpose being a more collaborative relationship with membership and Executive. Efforts on SAO board-building was a special focus over the earlier part of this year.

In the wake of COVID-19, I communicated with members to share resources for online teaching, to advise of new training opportunities ([SOS](#)) and revised SAO scholarships, offering 12 x \$50 scholarships

to offset costs and increase accessibility for more members to take SOS training units. I liaised with the SAO conference committee to provide member updates on cancellation due to COVID-19.

SAO WEBSITE

I collaborated with Claire on the SAO's [new website](#). Elements of its useability are currently being ironed out and tweaked, but the updated platform offers significantly increased security and accessibility. Our bolstered teacher database is a result of my efforts to ensure members submit a photo and bio for our website upon renewal or registration, thereby providing more information for interested Suzuki families across Ontario.

ANTI-RACISM + DEI

On June 7 and June 9 I attended the SAA Town Halls on Anti-Racism, and have remained engaged and informed on developments with the SAA's organizational plan for DEI and anti-racism. The [SAO's Racial Injustice Action Plan](#) on the SAO website was created by the SAO Executive in June, shared on our media platforms. I led the compilation of an [anti-racism resource list](#) and shared some of my personal anti-racism efforts with members in the SAO summer newsletter. Ongoing work for the SAO in DEI and anti-racism will take place with Board training workshops, upcoming learning events for SAO members, and the focus on DEI and anti-racism in our new strategic plan.

Over summer and Fall, I had several conversations with professional BIPOC educators to investigate potential anti-racism and DEI learning opportunities for the SAO membership and board, and am proposing a learning event to take place in February 2021. I am meeting later this month with an Ontario Arts Council officer to explore possibilities of a granting opportunity for the SAO that would allow special scholarships and support for teachers in the northernmost part of the province.

SUMMARY

As I complete the requisite Chapter Affiliate Annual Report to submit to the SAA after this AGM, it is clear that this year has been about prioritizing community and support. I am very thankful for the opportunity to have led the SAO over this year.

Annual Vice-Chair Report - Debbie Hammond

This has been a productive year in developing resources for members. The SAO archival project has been in progress for some time. Last November, Wendy Seravalle-Smith passed on 3 boxes of materials containing various documents and VHS tapes of archival material. Upon reflection and careful consideration, the Executive team has decided that we will continue to digitize the newsletters to create as complete a record for the SAO as possible. From the collection of VHS tapes, bids were solicited to determine the cost of digitizing the entire collection, however, the cost was prohibitive. After reviewing the contents of the VHS library, 5 tapes were selected to be digitized. The tapes contained lecture presentations by foundational Suzuki teachers, and represent what the Executive believes will hold the most value for members. These tapes are currently being transferred by Rex at Ottawa Video Transfer. This project should be completed by November 7.

On the advice of our accountant, Sam, the SAO is changing how we do certain aspects of the annual conference. The executive determined that the Vice Chair would begin serving as the liaison between the Executive team and the Conference team. In support of this task, I have started to create a package of basic forms for use by the conference team. These include task lists, approximate deadline dates, clinician contracts and a sample budget. These items are currently in progress, and will hopefully be complete for use in the planning of the 2021 conference. I would like to thank Carmen and Liz for sharing their wealth of knowledge from their experiences on the Conference planning teams in Guelph and Waterloo.

In light of the current COVID circumstances, the SAO held their first online event for teachers in the end of August. We invited Meghan Smith, RN to discuss current health recommendations and best practices for studio safety. It was a very informative evening attended by more than 30 teachers. We are hopeful that this event was the beginning of something new the SAO can present to support our teaching community.

Annual Area Reports

519 East Report - Andrea Cook

So much has happened since our last conference, a year ago, that it seems like much more than a year must have gone by.

Despite the difficulties faced navigating the pandemic, Suzuki teachers all over have continued to find new ways to inspire families and keep the music going. Many of us have participated in new online training courses, and made connections with teachers in other areas who we might never have met otherwise.

Suzuki Talent Education of Waterloo has fantastic news to share. STEW is excited to announce that after a lot of hard work and many hours they have officially received Charitable Status. A huge congratulations to all the faculty at STEW!

With all the new connections that are being made online, new projects are also springing up. The Suzuki String School of Guelph is participating in Supernova: Superstring Spectacular. This event involves many violin groups from different Suzuki schools across North America, who have each recorded one of David Cutler's arrangements of book 1 pieces.

Despite the many challenges that face us, music making continues to thrive and grow, and to be reimaged in different ways.

519 West Report - Rebecca Ashworth

I am honoured to be taking on this new role as 519 West representative. Earlier this fall I reached out and introduced myself to the SAO members in the 519 West area and submitted a report to the newsletter.

Over the next year, I hope to learn as much as I can about the SAO Board and will work to increase membership engagement in the 519 West area.

613 East Report - Laura Nerenberg

New normal is a term we've all heard bandied about since March. And, while it's true that for many of us in Ontario, teaching online is definitely new and also, for now, seemingly normal, I refuse to believe it's normal in the sense that I will forever teach on zoom.

I'll confess I've enjoyed being a student again during the pandemic. I've always sought out training opportunities. I believe it's important, that as teachers, we constantly renew ourselves. Suzuki himself was always looking for new ideas, and I'm convinced that he too would have embraced technology and sought for better ways to reach students during a global pandemic.

While I cannot wait to hear my students in the same room once again, I will be keeping some of the new strategies I've adopted in an effort to keep students more motivated and connected to their violin studies in between lessons.

One strategy that has proven to be a huge boon to those students who have embraced it, is between-lesson-videos. In addition to regular assignments, I assign specific spots in pieces, or scales or review pieces with a specific focus, or even improvisations to be sent to me via an unlisted YouTube link. This has allowed me to get a better sense of a student's tone and rhythmic accuracy. And, if a student is working on previews, I can catch misunderstandings or small errors before they become ingrained. I've also asked for some videos shot from a specific angle that I cannot access during a normal lesson.

Another strategy I've employed is the use of Carey Beth Hockett's Music bingo games to reinforce music theory and reading skills in a fun environment. These games have been hugely popular with all my students and you can purchase them from Ms. Hockett directly by emailing her: careybethhockett@yahoo.com

Finally, in an effort to maintain the connection with each student, I sent them each a small care package just before Halloween. In addition to stickers, fingerboard tapes for the younger ones and pencils I hand-wrote a note for each child, addressed directly to them.

Because so much of the work we do is based on relationships, I want to make sure to keep nurturing my relationship with my students.

I'll be hosting zoom-recital in early December followed by a zoom-group/improvisation concert in mid-December. Celebrating their accomplishments has never been more important.

905 North/705 Report - Susan Beth Barack

It has been an honour serving as the 905 North/705 representative again this past year. Despite the challenges presented in "these unprecedented times," our music has kept us motivated. Our role as teachers in our students' lives was truly significant as a steady, loving presence even as we moved swiftly into a virtual environment.

Some of us had already been offering at least some online lessons, so it was not as huge a transition to move everything online. In the end, everyone banded together and exchanged ideas through FaceBook or a good old-fashioned phone call, and we are still going strong. In fact, Zoom groups have become a highlight for many of us! Despite the drawbacks we have found there are always benefits and we are all making the best of it.

I am especially proud that our members contributed to the amplification of prioritizing diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives; perhaps one of the more positive outcomes of the often bleak tone this year took.

Thank you once again to the SAO for funding members' professional development to enhance our ability to best serve our organization as we continue Dr. Suzuki's legacy into the 21st century. Many of us enjoyed the opportunity to continue the tradition of summer courses, but this year online. The fact that

training is now available online makes it more accessible to more people, and this will surely benefit our entire Suzuki community.

I have continued to reach out to all members in my area to solicit news updates for the SAO newsletters ([see past issues for detailed 905 North/705 Studio/School updates](#)), and to initiate cross studio activities, although the events that were planned for spring 2020 either moved online or were cancelled.

Come what may, we know we can count on the support and collaboration of our awesome colleagues. Please do not hesitate to contact me regarding your studio updates or any other inquiries. I am always happy to hear from one and all!

416 Report - Maya Chilton

It's been exciting to take on this new role as area rep for the 416. While there is much to celebrate in the tenacity of families, parents and students, there remains much work to be started for us as teachers.

While I haven't had much contact with schools and teachers in my area despite multiple email introductions and enquiries, I do know all schools and teachers are experiencing the same struggles. Toronto has been in a modified stage 2 for the past month and the majority of schools have not resumed in person lessons. While there are exceptions, high daily case numbers have kept most of us teaching online exclusively. Some families have easily made the switch to online and are managing and even thriving while others are struggling and even pausing lessons or stopping altogether. It's yet a stark reminder that we are not all equally "in this together". I'd love to discuss this disparity between teachers and their situations as well as that of families and children.

I had almost no response to my enquiry about how to make our programs and teaching more inclusive and diverse. I do understand that emails go unanswered or forgotten. However it is troubling that there seems to be little interest in making even the smallest changes. Suggestions are performative and wildly problematic. I would love the opportunity to discuss this further.