



American Guild of Organists
Sarasota-Manatee Chapter
Minutes of Executive Committee Meeting
January 29, 2025 11 a.m.
Church of the Redeemer, Sarasota

CHAPTER OFFICERS

Sam Nelson
Dean

Vacant
Sub-Dean

Bryan Cordell
Secretary

Glen Olsen
Treasurer

AT-LARGE MEMBERS

2025

Linda Petersen
Craig Ramberger

2026

James Guyer
Jane Hunder

2027

Brandon Kouri
Glenn Priest

Chaplain – Rev. Charleston
Wilson

Registrar/Membership –
Michael Bodnyk

Placement – John Ferreira

TAO Reporter – John Behnke

Webmaster – Bryan Cordell

AGENDA

- I. **Call to Order** – Dean Sam Nelson called the Executive Committee (EC) meeting to order at 11:15 a.m.
- II. **Roll Call/Quorum** – 8 Members Present
 - a. Sam Nelson, Dean
 - b. Glen Olsen, Treasurer
 - c. Bryan Cordell, Secretary/Webmaster
 - d. Jane Hunder, Executive Board
 - e. Glenn Priest, Executive Board (via ZOOM)
 - f. Brandon Kouri, Executive Board
 - g. Craig Ramberger, Executive Board
 - h. Linda Petersen (Executive Board)
- 1 Member Absent:
 - a. James Guyer (Executive Board)
- III. **Approval of Minutes** – Executive Committee Meeting, October 23, 2024
 - a. Secretary Bryan Cordell summarized previous meeting minutes and requested any additional inputs, questions, comments
 - b. Hearing none, Dean Sam Nelson moved to approve the minutes, Glen Olsen seconded. Motion carried
 - c. Secretary Cordell reminded everyone that minutes would continue to be distributed and reviewed by e-mail from this point forward to provide a timelier posting to the chapter website
- IV. **Dean's Report** – Sam Nelson
 - a. Filling Open Sub-Dean Position: No candidate has been identified and no further action will be taken on this as we are now moving into the nominating process for the next year. Filling this position will be rolled into that process
 - b. Nominating Committee: Asked 3 individuals to chair with no takers. Will continue to reach out to other possible individuals for this effort
 - c. Kids 'N Pipes: Very successful event with 8 students in attendance along with several adults, including chapter members. Discussed



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possible follow-up opportunities to keep these students engaged on further opportunities with organ playing, including possible establishment of a youth organ scholarship

- d. February Guest Artist Concert: James Kennerley has been confirmed for an Organ Concert on Monday, February 10, 2025 @ Christ Episcopal Church in Bradenton

(NOTE FOR THE RECORD - An e-mail motion was submitted by Dean Nelson to the Executive Committee on January 20 for approval to proceed with a concert contract to include estimate for costs. The motion was seconded by Bryan Cordell on-line and approved via e-mail by the Committee with concur votes from all EC members. This e-mail request is included in *Attachment 1*)

Dean Nelson discussed the effort to setup video equipment at the church to support the silent movie. He will oversee that effort and coordinate with both the church and the guest artist

Discussion turned to whether or not to have a social event as part of this concert. Since the church no longer has an on-site catering team, our chapter would need to contract separately for a caterer or chapter volunteers would need to support. General consensus was to not have a social reception for this event as the timing on a Monday evening would make it uncertain how many people would come earlier (if before) or stay later (if after). Additionally, both the cost of a caterer or imposition on chapter volunteers to support was considered prohibitive

- e. Annual Banquet: This event is still scheduled for Monday, May 12 at St. Armand's Key Lutheran Church. Start date for installation of the new Schantz pipe organ has been delayed until February, however, the church is still pushing to have the organ installed and all storm-related repairs completed by early April in time for Easter. So, the banquet on May 12 should not be in question

Discussion also about having exhibits at the banquet that would be of interest to chapter members. These could include:

1. A display of historical chapter records from the physical archives (Dean's chapter diaries, logs, notebooks, as well as newsletters, programs, etc.)
2. A music exchange table where members could bring music they no longer use and trade/exchange with other members
3. Others?

ACTION: Bryan Cordell to keep in contact with Michael Bodnyk @ SAKLC to status schedule of the organ installation, church



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repairs, and catering requirements. Also, confirm space availability for and location of possible exhibits

V. Treasurer's Report – Glen Olsen

- a. Presented second quarter financial report for October 1 – December 31, 2024 (*Attachment 2*)
- b. Financially, we're in pretty good shape with an account balance of \$19,110 as of Dec 31
- c. Summarized recent remits and how the transition to the new National AGO on-line system was impacting this process for local chapters. Presented summary of remits for 2024: 15 regular members @ \$45 each, 39 special members @ \$35 each, and 1 young member @ \$20 each. Total members: 55. Total dues received: \$2060
- d. Provided a projected schedule of membership renewals and related remits for 2025. The vast majority occur in the June-August timeframe. Noted that a National AGO dues increase is coming in July 2025
- e. Non-profit status filed with the IRS on Dec 5, 2024
- f. Discussed on-going research and recommendation to switch bank accounts, including changing our chapter address on the checking account. Perhaps look at PNC Bank as a viable alternative for the chapter. Also, general consensus that we should maintain parallel bank accounts with old/new institutions for an appropriate transition period to ensure no adverse financial impacts
ACTION: Glen Olsen to continue researching alternatives to our current Bank of America (BoFA) account (due to excessive fees) and report additional findings at the next session
- g. General discussion among EC members on other possible revenue generating alternatives for the chapter in addition to membership dues. These options include donations, grants, advertising, etc. This will warrant further and on-going discussion at future sessions
- h. With no further discussion or questions on the Q2 financial statement, Dean Sam Nelson moved to accept, Bryan Cordell seconded. Motion carried

VI. Secretary/Webmaster's Report – Bryan Cordell

- a. Summarized recent website updates to include:
 1. Content refresh on the home page and sub-menu pages



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2. Added new photo galleries for recent chapter events (Venice Organ Crawl, Kids 'N Pipes/Orgelkids)
 3. Updated and released the membership directory (January)
 4. Posted newsletters and event brochures
 5. Refreshed the calendar
 6. Posted meeting minutes
 7. Implemented additional password protections for sensitive documents
 8. Revised, added, and removed multiple position descriptions for local music positions
 9. Refreshed the substitute list
- b. Membership Add/Drops Summary for 2024 – Presented a report of membership changes for 2024 (*Attachment 3*)
1. 2 added members, 11 dropped members for a net loss of 9 members (down 14%)
 2. For some drops, advanced age, mobility/medical issues, moving out of the local area were the primary reason. For others, not sure
 3. Discussion followed on importance of having an active Membership Coordinator within the chapter to keep track of adds/drops. They can help welcome new members and get them engaged, while finding out why current members are dropping and keep leadership informed on trends

VII. **Final Discussion: Future Chapter Direction** – Highlighted multiple issues facing the chapter and discussed possible options going forward.

- a. Membership Decline and Lack of Involvement – As noted previously, we experienced a 14% drop in membership this past year. Also, it is becoming increasingly difficult to get members to turn out for chapter events. Many events only have 5-7 members show. Discussed contributing factors such as post-COVID malaise, geographic size of the chapter, time constraints, traffic congestion as a discouragement, older member demographic, compressed seasonal schedule, competition from multiple music venues, etc. Agreed that better outreach (Membership Coordinator) and a change in programming approach are needed. Going forward, perhaps look for more opportunities to partner with other music venues to jointly share the costs and minimize chapter member workload



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- b. Chapter Leadership Vacancies – We were not able to fill the Sub-Dean vacancy this past year as all individuals who were asked declined. We are currently having difficulty finding individuals to serve on the Nominating Committee and fill upcoming vacancies (Dean, Sub-Dean, 2 At-Large Members). Will continue to survey current chapter members and look at creative alternatives to keep the leadership positions filled

VIII. **Adjournment** – Seeing no other agenda items for discussion, Dean Sam Nelson asked for a motion to adjourn. Glen Olsen made the motion; Bryan Cordell seconded. Motion carried

Respectfully submitted,
Bryan Cordell, Secretary

Attachment 1: Request by Dean Sam Nelson for Executive Committee approval of the James Kennerley concert, February 10, 2025 at Christ Episcopal Church, Bradenton

Attachment 2: Financial Report (Q2), G. Olsen, Treasurer

Attachment 3: Membership Add/Drops for 2024, B. Cordell, Secretary



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Attachment 1

Request by Dean Sam Nelson for Executive Committee approval of the James Kennerley concert, February 10, 2025 at Christ Episcopal Church, Bradenton

*January 20, 2025 at 04:13:52 PM EST, Sam Nelson
<samnelson@redeemersarasota.org> wrote:*

Dear Executive Committee Members,

The Program Committee would like to have an event in the northern territory of our chapter before the end of the year. We would like to present organist James Kennerly at Christ Church Bradenton on February 10 (I believe the time will be 6pm). Mr. Kennerly will give a concert of more "traditional" organ music which would include transcriptions. Part of the program would also include the accompaniment of a silent movie, something he is known for doing quite well.

James Kennerly is the Municipal Organist at the Merrill Auditorium in Portland Maine where he plays the Kotschmar Memorial Organ, a 102 rank, 7,000-pipe Austin organ that was rebuilt and expanded by Foley-Baker in 2012 (including the rebuild of the Austin Universal Windchest---yes, 102 ranks on one chest. The organ curator's office is INSIDE the chest!). Mr. Kennerly received his training from Cambridge University and The Juilliard School, studying with David Sanger, Thomas Trotter, and McNeil Robinson. He also holds the prestigious Fellowship of the Royal College of Organists diploma.

You can read more about him here: <https://www.jameskennerley.com/about>

His fee is \$4,000 plus travel and 3-nights hotel reimbursement. Glen can chime in here, but we currently have nearly \$20k in the bank and it doesn't do us any good hoarding it! We also discussed at the PC meeting about having a reception afterwards, so we plan to make a small donation both to the church and to the Culinary Choir (assuming they are available on short notice---otherwise it will be a self-produced reception if the space is available). All in all, I estimate that we will be looking at something in the \$5,000-\$5,500 range. Do keep in mind that this event will be open to the public and we intend to charge \$20 per ticket which will help make some of the money back. We also intend to make the event free for anyone 18 and under.



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Advertising will be done on a boosted Facebook post as we have done in the past with great success (I am donating the money for this portion). We also intend to contact State College of Florida to get students, and we also hope that St. Stephens will share this with their families (St. Stephens is the school that is run at Christ Church Bradenton).

The Program Committee all agree that this would be a good use of funds and provide our members with an extremely entertaining night out. All of our members would receive free tickets for themselves and spouse or significant other.

I'd like to do this in the proper way, so please REPLY ALL. We will need someone to motion to approve, someone to second, and then an "aye" or "nay" from everyone else. If you have questions before casting your vote, please write to me in a separate email and I'm happy to answer those questions.

Thank you!

Sam Nelson
Organist and Choirmaster



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Attachment 2: Financial Report (Q2)

Posted separately as a password protected file



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Attachment 3: Membership Add/Drops for 2024

Members Dropped	Date	Reason
Mr. David A. Cobb	2/29/2024	Advanced Age - Issues
Christopher Phillips	2/29/2024	Unknown
Hoang Pham	4/30/2024	Unknown
David L. Stasney	5/31/2024	Unknown
Mrs. Susan E. Crumpler, BME MM	6/30/2024	Advanced Age - Issues
Mr. Richard Holdsworth, BA	6/30/2024	Unknown - Retired from full time church?
Ms. Mary P. Webb, BA	6/30/2024	Unknown
Ruth Sheridan Cobb, M.M., B.Mus	8/31/2024	Advanced Age - Issues
Mr. Steven R. Phillips, MMus	9/30/2024	Unknown
Charles F. Allen, BMus	11/30/2024	Unknown
William P. Feigley, EdD	11/30/2024	Unknown
<i>Total Drops:</i>	-11	

Members Added	Date	Reason
Dr. Jonathan Spivey, DMA	7/12/2024	Unknown
John Guliano	8/14/2024	Unknown
<i>Total Adds:</i>	+2	

Net:	-9	-14%
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