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**NER-AMTA General Membership Meeting**  
Zoom  
Saturday, June 6, 2020

President Adrienne Flight called the meeting to order at 10:03 am.

**1. Welcome & Introductions**

Adrienne welcomed us to this virtual space, reminding attendees to mute unless speaking and to use the Zoom chat if you have a question.

Adrienne spoke about the NER's commitment to diversity and inclusion. The NER formed the DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) task force that is now transitioning to a standing committee. This represents the ongoing effort to learn and change. The task force, transitioning to a committee, has been working with a consultant about allyship. The members of the task force have also created a survey to collect baseline data from the region. Look out for this survey and please fill it out.

These are all important steps to engaging in a deeply meaningful way. This is the time to recommit as we examine our biases and focus on steps to change the broken patterns that currently exist. Consider your engagement and your contribution.

Channing Shippen and Kathlynn Sell have organized an online CMTE series. They have worked tirelessly for the in-person conference that was cancelled, the current CMTE series, and next year's conference.

Adrienne acknowledged and thanked the extended board.

**2. Approval of Minutes**

Channing made a motion to approve the minutes from the AMTA National Conference general membership meeting from November 23, 2019. Brian Jantz and Heather Wagner seconded the motion. With no discussion, the motion passed and the minutes were approved.

**3. Treasurer's Report**

Adrienne reported on behalf of Treasurer Rebekah DiMieri. We currently have \$14,855.05 in our checking account and \$50,473.27 in our savings account. The NER-AMTAS account has \$2098.19.

**4. Strategic Plan**

Adrienne presented the strategic plan of the NER. This plan is in place until the end of the fiscal year at which point we create and vote on a new strategic plan.

- Membership—continue engaging with and supporting our members
- Financial—continue our financial responsibilities
- Professional Issues—task forces and leadership and guidance to promote diversity and inclusion

**DRAFT**

**5. Bylaws Changes**

Brian reviewed the current bylaws text and the proposed new text, offering explanations for the changes. The following bylaws changes were voted upon:

**Proposed Change Number 1**

*Current Language*

ARTICLE VIII. NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

Section 1. Elections for the elective regional officers and Primary and Alternate Delegates to the AMTA Assembly shall be held every odd year at the annual meeting.

Section 2. A slate of nominees for elective officers shall be presented by the Nominating Committee. Additional nominations may be accepted from the floor at least 24 hours before the vote is held.

*Proposed Change*

ARTICLE VIII. NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

Section 1. Elections for the elective regional officers and Primary and Alternate Delegates to the AMTA Assembly shall be held every odd year at the annual meeting.

Section 2. A slate of nominees for elective officers shall be presented by the Nominating Committee. Nominations from the membership shall be received by the nominating committee no later than 72 hours before the annual meeting.

*Rationale*

To streamline and clarify the process of nominating candidates for elected office.

*Motion*

Channing made a motion to accept the proposed change as presented. Heather seconded the motion. With no discussion, the motion passed.

**Proposed Change Number 2**

*Current Language*

ARTICLE XIV. THE FISCAL YEAR

Section 1. The fiscal year shall be from July 1 to June 30.

*Proposed Change*

ARTICLE XIV. THE FISCAL YEAR

Section 1. The fiscal year will match the AMTA fiscal year.

*Rationale*

To match AMTA's fiscal period, which is changing to the calendar year starting January 1, 2021.

*Motion and Discussion*

Jean Nemeth suggested the wording "align with" rather than "match" the AMTA fiscal year. Jean made a motion to amend the wording to read "align with" rather than "match."

## DRAFT

Eve Montague seconded the motion. The motion carried. With the motion having carried for this amendment of wording, Heather called the question whether members are in favor of approving the updated bylaws change. The edited bylaws wording was approved. The updated change reads:

### ARTICLE XIV. THE FISCAL YEAR

Section 1. The fiscal year will align with the AMTA fiscal year.

## **6. DEI Task Force Update**

Marisol Norris, Jocelyn Khoo, Mark Fuller, and Shannon Kiley are the co-chairs of the DEI task force. Shannon reported today that their main goal as a task force was to gather and analyze needs, opinions, and experiences about diversity, equity, and inclusion in our region. Please look out for the DEI survey that will be emailed which will provide baseline data about where we are as a region. As we continue our work, we will be able to determine if we are making progress. The task force will be transitioning into a standing committee because this work is long ranging.

The task force is gathering resources for self-education so each of us is able to take the time and energy to dive into a list of resources. They have been talking about the opportunities to engage in this work individually, interpersonally, and systemically.

Tomorrow, June 7, there is an allyship training online. The DEI task force has been working with a consultant who has been incredibly helpful. She will be guiding us through this experience. Shannon reported that the task force is gathering names of people who are interested in joining the standing committee. If you are able and willing to contribute, reach out to Shannon, Adrienne, Brian, or the other DEI members.

## **7. NER Financial/Membership**

Mark Fuller of the Membership Committee shared links and resources about membership in the chat box of Zoom. You can contact him for any questions or topics related to membership. Mark highlighted the following membership benefits:

### *AMTA Benefits*

- Over 30 pre-approved CMTEs on the AMTA website included with AMTA membership
- Welcome to the profession packet which includes coupons for the first three years of your professional membership
- Support for paying professional membership in installments
- Scholarships and grants have been extended due to COVID-19—take a look to see what may still be open and what you may look at for next year

### *NER-Specific Benefits*

- 11 Pay-it-Forward scholarships awarded for people to become members—look out for the next Pay-it-Forward round in the fall
  - This is open to any music therapist seeking support for their membership

## DRAFT

- There is a new membership support tab on the NER website which will direct you to the resources Mark has discussed

### *COVID-19 Response*

- Look for the #neramtacommunityresource on all of the social media platforms. Using this hashtag has been a way for us to connect and gather information in a streamlined way.
- In April, the NER-AMTA sent out a survey help to understand how our region is being impacted. Members and non-members were encouraged to complete it.
- In May #nercommunitycollaborations was created to share music with each other through social media. This is still open and feel free to engage in this.

Reach out to Mark if you have any ideas to support our members.

## **8. NER-AMTAS/SAAB Update**

Part of our strategic plan is to bolster membership on professional and student levels.

Kayla Daly is the regional SAAB (Student Affairs Advisory Board) advisor and Diana Cortes is the new NER-AMTAS president.

Diana reported that the past year's goal was to create more opportunities to learn from and with each other. The Passages 20 conference was held in October and included students from all three of the NER schools. The music therapy awareness open mic and trivia night that had been scheduled for April 11 was unfortunately cancelled due to the pandemic. Diana reported that the schools had also scheduled fundraisers scheduled. Berklee raised \$127 from a March event. Leslie and Anna Maria were not able to complete their fundraisers due to scheduling conflicts/lack of student response. Two \$75 membership scholarships were awarded to students from Berklee and Anna Maria. No scholarships were allocated for the conference because it was cancelled. The student business meeting was held on May 16 online. The student board approved 13 bylaws changes. They filled nine of the ten board positions with the treasurer position remaining unfilled. The breakdown of the new board is three Berklee students, five Anna Maria students, and one Leslie student.

Kayla talked about supporting students and commented that the national and regional online conference models will inform how the student platforms proceed.

## **9. President's Award**

Adrienne presented this year's award to Lisa Kynvi and showed a video tribute that was presented at Passages.

## **10. Opportunities for Involvement**

Adrienne presented an opening for an NER representative on the Music Therapy Informed Listening Workgroup. Anyone who is interested can contact Adrienne at [president@neramta.org](mailto:president@neramta.org).

## **11. Conference Update**

Channing reported about the regional conference. She expressed that while it was no easy task to cancel the conference, it was an easy decision to prioritize the safety of our members over making a profit. This weekend and next weekend will be a virtual CMTE series highlighting classes that would translate well to an online platform and also highlighting the allyship training. This series is free for our members. It is also a financially feasible opportunity for non-members. We have 92 people who have signed up including music therapists from other regions. Additionally, there have been many inquiries about recording the CMTEs. The allyship training will not be recorded in order to create a safe space for people to voice their concerns and opinions. Presenter Karen Young has agreed to work with us on creating allyship resources that we can issue out to our members to free.

Next year's conference is scheduled to be in Vermont from April 14-21, 2021. Channing expressed enormous thanks to Nancy Perkins who masterfully negotiated with Stoweflake. Presentations that were accepted this year will be given priority for next year's conference to honor the hard work that went into the presentations for 2020.

## **12. Student Scholarships**

NER gives out three awards for returning students and three for new professionals. Representatives from each school presented awards at this time.

Lisa Summer presented the following awards for Anna Maria College:

- Student: Cammy Gallagher
- Professional: Liz Hastings

Joy Allen presented the following awards for Berklee College of Music:

- Student: Grace Bigus
- Professional: Alex Ford

Rebecca Zarate presented the following awards for Leslie University:

- Student: Rachel Quirbach
- Professional: Nataly Kruh Elendt

## **13. In Memoriam**

Adrienne invited us to take a moment to honor the people who have come before us and who have died and honored Margaret Skaliotis, Lauren Calista, and all of the lives we have lost to COVID-19 and racial violence.

Adrienne invited meeting participants to unmute to share names in memoriam. George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and Tamir Rice were honored.

Jennifer Sokira invited us to hold space the losses we are feeling with our routines, our work, our client relationships, and losses of friends and family. We can hold space for ourselves as we draw deeply on our resilience navigating through this time of great change.

#### **14. AMTA State of the Association**

Adrienne welcomed AMTA President Deb Williams. This is not the way she planned to be here, but she was nevertheless join the NER meeting and thanked us for our service. Deb reported that the AMTA mid-year virtual meeting is scheduled for next week. The AMTA board of directors usually meets twice a year in June and November and now has been meeting monthly. The national office staff has been working from home and is slowly going back as dictated by Montgomery County, Maryland. The COVID-19, chaired by President Elect Lori Gooding, has been in consultation with a host of experts in various areas who are pulling together needed information. A short-term task force was approved to assist the COVID-19 task in assisting students, interns, faculty, and internship directors. This task force will be led by Andrew Knight. There are so many resources coming in, and we need a better way to organize it all. We expect that by early to mid July there will be a whole new host of materials that everyone will be able to access.

Deb then reported on the AMTA national conference rates. The board thought, researched, and spoke to other people. Deb echoed Channing's earlier sentiment that the AMTA decided to prioritize members over profit. The AMTA will be cutting conference rates to make it more affordable for people to attend. There will be only two rates this year with an extended early bird time. Rates for professional members are \$199 early bird and \$250 regular. Professional non-member rates are \$250 early bird and \$325 regular. The singular college student rate is \$99. There is a neuroscience track that is \$150. The AMTA is hoping to reach many non-music therapists with this option. The day rate is \$300. The new high school tract option is \$25. This will only give access to introductory sessions and serves as a way to help introduce high school students and their parents/educators to music therapy. Much of the conference will be recorded for later use. This conference will be a way to obtain many credits for one low price.

Deb then addressed the search for the new AMTA CEO. A search committee has been formed and a job profile was created. This search is looking very different than the last search. Consultant Shira reached out and spoke to members, non-members, students, and people who are not music therapists. She got a good look at what we are saying what we want/need. The job description has just gone out and all 4 bylaws changes were voted on and approved. Deb clarified that the AMTA is now looking for a CEO rather than an executive director. Shira advised that this title was more likely to attract candidates who will fulfill our need. The search committee is comprised of seven people. When the committee has the applicant pool down to three choices, they will be turning the names over to the board. The bylaws indicate that the board will hire the CEO. The last two searches were completed by board members who made up the search committee. This time, people outside of the board have drawn in to give input. They hope to have a CEO by the fall.

Deb opened the floor to questions from attendees. The following topics arose:

- Michele Forinash commented on the current search procedure, wondering why the new CEO is not being vetted by the whole music therapy community especially after discussions at the last national conference. Deb responded that four search firms were interviewed. AMTA asked two important questions: What about considering the idea of everyone at the conference meeting candidates and vetting them? Who

## DRAFT

- should be on the search committee? All four firms said no to the first question, reporting that you can't have so many people giving input. The entire membership does not have the ability to delve into the applications/interview process to truly get to know the candidates. They looked back at topics that have been contentions in the past at (master's level entry for example). Even at the assembly meetings, which only include a portion of the membership, there were hours upon hours of debates with people having different amounts of information. There was a concern that not everyone would be able to have as much information as a smaller search committee. The four firms said the number of people on the ideal search committee is seven. AMTA also did not want to wait until the November conference. Also of note, even at the national conferences, we do not have representation from the entire AMTA membership. A CEO is needed as soon as possible.
- Joy referenced the new task force being designed regarding education/internships during the COVID crisis. Joy wanted to hear about the communication and how voices are being engaged. There are many resources available and many people who want to be of service. What is the process of engaging these voices? How do we ensure that all voices are being heard? Deb reiterated that Lori Gooding chairs the COVID task force. She talked about how the board makes a task force. They appoint a chair and that person is in charge of collecting the people who will be the most helpful. Members of the task force are fluid depending on what is needed. Right now, anything should be directed to Lori Gooding as the chair. Joy clarified that she appreciates everyone's service. Frequently information is gathered on a "who knows who" basis, and the next step should be putting a call out for experts in that area. Often voices that would have amazing information to offer are being left out because no one is reaching out to them. A call through email or social media is an extra step that would be great to get a diversity of voices. Deb reported that some of those concerns have been raised. The national board is currently working without a CEO, and from a shared government plan, that is not perfect. They have recently worked out communication and currently have the national office posting a COVID update every other week. They are aware of that need to have communication.
  - Eve, co-chair of the AIAC (Association Internship Approval Committee), encouraged people to check in with your committee representatives who have been involved with the COVID resources. That will be helpful going forward. Deb reported that Andrew Knight's committee will be working with the AIAC and the APAC (Academic Program Approval Committee) to make sure that the information put forth is helpful.
  - Deb invited us to please feel free to email her or reach out to Heather Wagner who is on the AMTA COVID task force.
    - [deborah.benkovitz@gmail.com](mailto:deborah.benkovitz@gmail.com)
    - [heatherwagner.mtbc@gmail.com](mailto:heatherwagner.mtbc@gmail.com)
    - Deb's email is on different places on the AMTA site. There is also a "contact us" button at the bottom of the AMTA website. Messages submitted through this form are forwarded to her usually within a day.

## **15. Good and Welfare**

Kayla has a baby on the way!

**DRAFT**

Nicole O'Malley recognized efforts by the state task forces and task force chairs who have remained active through the COVID crisis.

**16. Adjournment**

Channing entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting, and Brian seconded the motion. With no discussion, the motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 11:44 am.

Respectfully submitted,  
Cecilia Burns, MMT, MT-BC  
Secretary, NER-AMTA