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NER-AMTA General Membership Meeting
The Westin Harborview Hotel, Portland Maine
Friday, April 4, 2025

President Wendy Krueger called the meeting to order at 8:09 am.

1. Welcome & Introductions

Wendy welcomed attendees to the meeting and the 2025 NER Conference, leading in the singing of “Breath of Air” by Mark Lipman, LMHC (Lesley ’07). The agenda for the meeting was presented, with incoming Vice President Emily Hawley and outgoing Vice President Mary Reinsch recognized for their effort in putting together this conference.

2. Indigenous Land Acknowledgement and Donation

Wendy acknowledged the space and territories on which this conference is held, recognizing the Wabanaki Nation. She shared it is essential, especially now, that we recognize the continuing impact of systemic oppression upon Indigenous people and communities and the ongoing effects of colonization. In commitment to allyship, self-reflection and pledging where we can to support Indigenous communities who originally occupied this land donations were made to:

The Abbe Museum

Mission: To illuminate and advance greater understanding of and support for Wabanaki Nations’ heritage, living cultures, and homelands.

Wabanaki REACH

Mission: We support the self-determination of Wabanaki people through education, truth-telling, restorative justice, and restorative practices in Wabanaki and Maine communities. We aspire to restore right relations, responsibility, compassion, love, reciprocity, abundance and joy.

A moment of silence was held.

3. Approval of Meeting Minutes

Jean Nemeth made a motion to approve the minutes from the December 11, 2024 NER-AMTA general business meeting. Cathy Kang seconded the motion, and after a successful vote the minutes were approved as presented.

4. Music Therapy in Maine

Kate Beever presented on the state of music therapy in Maine. There are increasing numbers of jobs in the state including two present openings at Affinity Hospice Care and Piper Shores Memory Care. She noted it takes time, patience and connection to build a reputation for the field in rural areas. The Portland Sea Dogs baseball team has partnered with music therapy numerous times to put on free programming for the community.

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Kate recognized Patricia Mulholland and Trish Jonason for their early work in the development of music therapy in Maine. Numbers of practicing music therapists are growing across the state, particularly along the coast. There is momentum building for professional advocacy, and there is now a Maine Music Therapy Association (mainemusictherapy.com).

A recent survey found these to be relevant topics among Maine music therapists:

- A lack of MT-BCs to meet community need
- Credential recognition
- Many Mainers are on Mainecare
- University programs, no specific music therapy degree program
- Department of Education challenges
- High social services turnover

Kate recognized collaboration and developing cross-cultural connections with other organizations and sectors in the state as the way forward. She thanked the region for coming to Maine for this year's conference, inviting attendees to local events and sites while visiting Portland.

5. Conference Updates

Vice President-Elect Emily Hawley and Vice President Mary Reinsch introduced themselves and gave an overview of the NER Conference 2025: "Amplify Your Voice." They shared how to access the certificate of attendance at the end of the program. Attendees were invited to share feedback, ideas and experiences. Emily thanked Mary for her service in the role of VP.

This year there are 25 concurrent sessions and 4 CMTEs. Of the 215 registered attendees, 86 are students. Gratitude was shared for educators, presenters, attendees, sponsors and advertisers while highlighting two Gold Tier Sponsors: Lesley University and Roman Music Therapy Services.

Others were recognized for their support in contributing to this year's conference, including the NER Conference Planning Committee, Executive Board, Conference Band, NERAMTAS Student Board and advisors, and NER Members.

6. Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Cathy Kang presented the current bank account balances:

Checking: \$12,738.33

Savings: \$74,751.55

Student Account: \$2,151.69

*Pending deposits: (\$738.07)

7. Committee Updates and Reports

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Association Internship Approval Committee: Eve Montague reminded those who took the national roster training yesterday to submit their applications. She noted there are 5 national roster internship programs in New England. On the national level there are 2 new co-chairs from different regions. The committee is reshaping slightly, and larger regions will have two committee members.

Professional Advocacy Committee: Lyzz Zinn spoke on the role of the committee in responding to misrepresentation and gathering data on these cases. The membership was encouraged to reach out any time with support needs around misrepresentation and/or advocacy, either to Lyzz or Maggie Connors. They are available for events and giving presentations on advocacy and representation needs. Openings were noted in the Midwest and southern regions for this committee; please contact Lyzz or Maggie if you have connections who are willing to serve in these regions of AMTA.

Academic Program Approval Committee: Heather Wagner submitted the following report:

The Academic Program Approval Committee's (APAC) primary focus is to review applications of new academic programs and re-approval applications for established programs, then provide recommendations to the AMTA Board of Directors for approval, deferral, or denial. In recent years the Committee has also implemented a 3-Year Status Update for newly approved programs to further assist them in their early program development, and Substantive Curriculum Change applications which are submitted by programs making significant changes, such as moving the coursework to online formats.

New Programs Approved since January 2024:

- Truman State University (Missouri)
- Louisiana State University
- University of Memphis
- University of Alabama-Birmingham
- University of Houston
- St. Cloud State University (Minnesota)– This program was approved by AMTA, then the University chose not to move forward with the program.

Total of 12 Program Re-approvals, Substantive Changes, and 3-year Status Updates completed in 2024-2025. 13 Re-Approvals, Substantive Change, and 3-year Status Updates currently in progress. 5 New Program proposals currently under review.

APAC completed 19 reviews since January 2024, and combined with those that continue to be processed, we have had 37 applications in our docket this past year. Every application requires multiple hours of initial review, then possibly weeks or months of discussion and follow-up reviews before the application can be recommended for AMTA Board approval. The Committee is comprised of one representative from each region and six At-Large members appointed by the AMTA Board of Directors. To assist the committee with this heavy workload the Board approved two extra At-Large members last year. This year the

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Committee plans to submit a proposal to the Board to amend the AMTA Bylaws to permanently expand the number of members. A motion to amend the Bylaws will ultimately go before the general membership for a vote.

Currently we are seeking Regional Representatives in the Great Lakes Region and the Western Region.

APAC is excited to be working with a new Council Coordinator, Becky Engen, who was a former chair of APAC for many years. We also want to thank the AMTA Board of Directors for providing a subscription to the online platform Box, which is a more secure and streamlined document management program that APAC is now using with Universities and Colleges for submission of applications. All our application forms have been updated to make the process smoother for both the Music Therapy Programs and the Committee Members. We are putting the final touches on a revision of the official Policies and Procedures for the Committee and will be submitting that document to the AMTA Board, and then to the Assembly of Delegates for approval within the next few months.

APAC is also in the process of formulating a response to the 21st Century Commission Report and the Revised Competency Proposal that was recently submitted by the Competency Review Task Force. Eventually the Committee will be making proposals to the Board and the Assembly of Delegates to revise the AMTA Standards of Education and Clinical Training to implement some of the recommendations suggested. This work will continue throughout the next few years.

Membership Committee: Ali Iaria reported the committee representatives from each AMTA region have been meeting regularly, focusing on a comparative benefits analysis across the membership. One initiative is to share programs that have been successful and learn more about offerings in other regions that could be of benefit and adopted into NER. The Pay It Forward program for reduced individual membership costs and AMTA's tiered fee structure remain in place. All feedback is welcomed.

8. AMTA Update

AMTA Vice President Jen Sokira presented a report on behalf of AMTA President Angie Snell.

Highlights:

- AMTA welcomed newly appointed Vice President-Elect Nicole Bowen.
- The 2024 Arthur Flagler Fultz Research Award was presented to Elizabeth L. Stegemoller, PhD, MT-BC. This year's application is now open.
- The new AMTA database update has separated the membership database from the website. Members are encouraged to log in to update their profiles in the system and explore the new software.
- The Music Man Foundation awarded AMTA a \$326,000 grant, funding the website redesign.

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- A survey is out through April 5th seeking feedback on the website redesign features. The timeline for this build is mid-late Fall of 2025. The website will be reduced from roughly 1,000 unique pages to about 250.
- The 2022 Workforce Survey report is being finalized and will soon be distributed. There will soon be a call for participation in the 2024 Workforce Survey.
- 2025 is considered the 75th anniversary of music therapy; there will be recognition of this milestone during the AMTA Fall Symposium.
- There is an open position for the 2024-2025 President Elect term. A call for 2026-2027 President and President-Elect positions will be coming soon. Please reach out to past President Lori Gooding at amtapresidentgooding@gmail.com if interested in learning more.
- New voices were invited and encouraged to serve in national leadership roles.
- The Commission Report and Competencies Update released last year can be accessed on AMTA-U. It is currently being reviewed by APAC and AIAC. The Assembly is reviewing the Competencies Review Task Force (CRTF) Report and will work together to address outstanding questions and compile a draft plan.
- The 2025 AMTA Symposium will be held virtually September 14-17, with extended asynchronous access through February 2026. A call for papers and reviewers can be found on AMTA-U.thinkific.com.

Financial Updates

- AMTA received a clean audit in 2023, showing significant improvement of organizational finances in the last few years. Preparation is underway for the next audit.
- AMTA has so far received \$200,000 of the \$360,000 from the Music Man Foundation grant to renovate our database system.

2024 Membership Percentage Facts

- Membership Tier Usage
 - Tier One (\$150): 24.8%
 - Tier Two (\$200): 23.2%
 - Tier Three (\$250): 52%
- Members are using all 3 price points, and there is widespread positive feedback on this tiered financial model. There will be new payment plan options with the rollout of the new website.

Government Relations Updates

- Jen recognized Judy Simpson and her impact in protecting music therapy with recent rapid changes in the national landscape. AMTA Government Relations updates are being released regularly and contain resources with suggested advocacy action.

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- There is currently tracking of government employees experiencing any employment changes or layoffs. All are invited to reach out to governmentrelations@musictherapy.org with any needs.
- Members are encouraged to use our voices to advocate by reaching out to our representatives and congresspeople.

Jen expressed gratitude and support for all music therapists navigating the uncertain landscape of this year. She encouraged all who have never sought out leadership positions to consider doing so, noting that the field of music therapy is stronger when we all join together.

At this juncture, Wendy asked for a motion to extend the meeting time by 10 minutes. Brian Jantz moved to extend the meeting until 10:10am. Carylbeth Thomas seconded the motion. The motion passed.

9. NER-AMTAS/SAAB Update

Alayah Elizabeth Tedder gave report updates on NER-AMTAS activities this past year. Passages 2025 was held at Westfield State University with 49 attendees including students, professionals, interns. Li Kynvi, founder of Passages, spoke at the meeting.

This year's Spring Event will be hosted at the conference after the board meeting, planned by Kara Duffy and SAAB Representative Cacia King Herlihy. Student board elections will be held this evening during the student board business meeting. There is also a fundraiser in the vendor hall to make or purchase a bracelet.

10. Student Scholarships

Berklee College of Music, presented by Brenda Ross:

Returning Student Award: **Wendy Feng**

Graduating Student Award: **Jonah Gangi**

Lesley University, presented by Dr. Leticia Prieto Alvarez:

Returning Student Award: **Emma Smith**

Graduating Student Award: **Chelsea Ventura**

Southern Connecticut State University, presented by Dr. Heather Wagner:

Returning Student Award: **Lindsey Brown**

Graduating Student Award: **Alexis Sorrell**

Westfield State University: presented by Dr. Tim Honig

Returning Student Award: **Priscilla Oluokun**

Graduating Student Award: **Dustin Stasinios**

University of Rhode Island, presented by Kathlynn Sell-Benguaich:

Returning Student Award: **Emma Schwab**

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Graduating Student Award: **Samuel Giunta**

11. NER President's Awards

Wendy presented the 2025 NER Presidential Awards.

Leadership Award: **Jennifer Kiss DeBedout, MM, MT-BC, NMT**

Impact Award: **Eve Montague MSM, MT-BC**

12. In Memoriam

Wendy opened the meeting for attendees to share the names of those we have lost and are in our hearts followed by a moment of silence and tone chimes.

At this time, Wendy asked for a motion to extend the meeting for another 10 minutes. Denise Jakel moved to extend the meeting until 10:20am. Tim Honig seconded the motion. The motion passed.

13. NER Election Results

Brian Jantz presented the results of the 2025 NER Election:

President: Krystal Demaine

Vice President: Ali Iaria

Secretary: KT Bagley

Treasurer: Erika Lowenthal

Assembly Delegates seated in January 2026:

Shannon Laine

Meredith Pizzi

Leticia Prieto Alvarez

Cecelia Burns

Alternate Delegates:

Evy Amato

Leanne Guidry

Sophia Paravalos

Hayley Jang

Sarah Sacala

14. Good and Welfare

A reminder was shared for the Arthur Flagler Fultz Research Award, with an application deadline of May 31, 2025.

Berklee College of Music and the Berklee Music and Health Exchange is hosting a symposium (in person or virtual) on May 16th: Intersection of Music and Psychedelic-Assisted Therapy (PAT).

There will be a Level 1 GIM Training June 14-17th at Westfield State University.

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The Community Music Center of Boston is hosting a music therapy meet-up on April 30th in Boston.

The Association for Music and Imagery will have their biannual conference at Water's Edge Resort in Connecticut May 20-23rd.

Collaborative song lists have been started in the vendor hall for all to share songs of joy, acceptance, positivity, perseverance, courage, peacefulness, power and resilience.

The Music Yard Sale is being held in the vendor hall Saturday morning.

In honoring the 75th anniversary of the legacy associations which now comprise AMTA, there is a poll open asking for readers' top two research articles from the Journal of Music Therapy and/or Perspectives to commemorate this milestone.

Berklee College of Music is celebrating the 30th anniversary of their music therapy program this fall.

Brian Jantz thanked President Wendy Kruger for her leadership, compassion and impact these past years serving the board.

15. Adjournment

Carylbeth Thomas shared a song to close this business meeting.
Wendy adjourned the meeting at 10:27am.

Respectfully submitted,
KT Bagley, MT-BC
Secretary, NER-AMTA