

**Alabama Vocal Association**  
**Thursday, January 25, 2024**  
**AVA Board Zoom Meeting**

Hilen Wilson called the meeting to order at 4:00pm on January 25th, 2024. Hilen Wilson, Jody Powell, Amanda Slay, Kristie Howze, Holly Luke, Zach Banks, Frank Andrews, Matthew Gardner, Debbie Flynn, Marlin Ward, and Nichole Hill. Christie Breland was not present.

Mrs. Wilson began the meeting at 4:00 pm via Zoom. She began the meeting with a brief reminder of our confidentiality clause before discussion was had in regards to AMEA (Alabama Music Educators Association) and the updates from their board meetings.

In the AMEA board meetings discussion was held in regards to the shut down and the cancellation of the state conference. With the grants that AMEA has received it was discussed to use the money for “Town Halls” and find a speaker to address AVA, ABA, and the other associations. In regards to schools who were chosen to perform at the state conference it was discussed that they be given a guaranteed spot for next year. In this discussion it was brought up that we need to be careful about still having enough spots for other groups and maybe giving them the option to perform at AMEA 2025 or if they do not want to perform next year then allowing them to submit an audition before the three year mark.

Also discussed at the AMEA meeting was the price of fees. As of next year the conference fee will rise from \$100 to \$150. In the AVA Board discussion of this subject concerns of attendance and having the cost raised 50% with a separate state fee were brought to the table. Hilen Wilson acknowledged everyones opinions and ideas and will discuss with others at a later date.

An email was sent out from AMEA in regards to refunds. Please see this email for information. Jody Powell picked up the plaques for all the choirs and such for AMEA. It was discussed and decided that plaques would be given to the people that earned them for the conference.

The dates for the 2024-2025 conference are January 15-18. However there is no contract signed yet. AMEA was supposed to be in a 2 year contract but they, Von Braun, will not be able to accommodate all the space that we will need.

Mrs. Wilson announced that the honor choir has been rescheduled for March 22nd, 2024. The performance will take place at Huntsville First Baptist. Rehearsals will be during the day and a performance held that night along with the Elementary All State Choir.

Mrs. Wilson then turned her attention to the State OCS, State Outstanding Choral Student judging. All district chairs will be involved with the interview and grading of each candidate. The interviews will be held virtually on Tuesday January 30th, 2024 beginning at 3:30pm. Each district chair has been sent a list of suggested interview questions along with the interview schedule. Amanda Slay will tally the scores.

State ME, Music Educator, interviews will be held on Zoom Thursday February 1st beginning at 3:30pm. Jody Powell and Nichole Hill will be conducting the interviews.

Mrs. Wilson thanked everyone for helping auditions run as smoothly as they could. This year's numbers for registration and auditions were very close to our pre COVID numbers. She did mention that they will be looking at a few different options for streamlining the process. Mrs. Wilson asked for any ideas from the board and stated that she has a few ideas of her own but is still currently working through them before presenting them to the All-State Teacher Panel.

The cost of hospitality this year was discussed. It was very high and it was suggested that we need to come up with an ideal number to spend on meals and snacks for judges and directors. Mrs. Kristie Howze said some spent between \$700-\$800 dollars and then there were some that spent \$300 dollars or less with the number of days not being an option. That it would be helpful to have a common template to follow.

Mrs. Wilson stated that the Pre-All State Board Meeting would be held February 27th, 2024 at 4:00 pm on Zoom. She asked that we all arrive Thursday morning February 28th, 2024 by 9 am to help set up rooms. Rehearsals should begin around 12:30pm. Mrs. Amanda Slay will be assigning some of the board as emergency contacts for the different All State Choirs.

The contract with PepWear was approved and Sweet Spot Live Recordings was also approved. Sweet Spot Live will be sending recordings as dropbox files instead of flash drives.

Mrs. Wilson informed the board that UA and Miles College would be our two collegiate performances this year.

All State this year will be at the BJCC and the HS Basketball championships will be going on at the same time. She asked that we were aware and to make our district aware that parking will be even worse than normal.

Mrs. Wilson asked that Nichole Hill get in contact with Bailey Brothers in regards to contracting them for pianos to be used in rehearsal spaces. Programs this year will need to be like last years but they will need to include the logos for different grants and partners on/in the program.

Mrs. Wilson informed the board that this year we would be hiring accompanists for All State from the Birmingham area to help save in expenses.

Mrs. Wilson reminded the district chairs that if they have not sent in their contracts to Kristie Howze for judges for SCPA/SE that they need to as soon as possible. It was noted that the request for payment, contract, and the W9 were needed.

Discussion was also had on how to best reserve rooms for judges. Again, cost and needs for judges and facilities was discussed. Making sure each site has a hospitality room for their judges, an adequate performance space, warm up room, and sight reading room to accommodate the schools that will be attending their SCPA/SE.

District Chairs were reminded of their duties in regards to music check, registration, registration table, runners, and how to organize each group/solo per envelope.

Mrs. Wilson also reminded the district chairs to make sure to communicate to the directors attending their event directions in regards to parking, how to complete the adjudication form, the auxiliary form, the sight reading form, buses, schedule, and making sure they all know about needing original music and no copies.

This year the AVA Board discussed and agreed upon Mrs. Diane Johnson being this year's recipient of the Frances P. Moss Award. Nichole Hill agreed to present the award at All State.

All State Show Choir (ASSC) saw 168 students register and had 140 to audition. The results should be announced by January 31st, 2024. Mrs. Wilson asked if there were any thoughts on how the new format went and discussion was had.

A general membership meeting will be held through Zoom to present the slate of officers so they can nominate and vote at All State. Mrs. Wilson agreed to send out a poll to the general membership to see what day and time would best fit for everyone.

Mrs. Wilson reviewed and presented the slate of officers to the current board.

#### **2024-2026 Board**

- President: Amanda Slay
- Vice President: Hilan Wilson
- President-Elect: Zach Banks
- Recording Secretary: Kate Dupuis
- District I Chair: Drew Mills
- District II Chair: Frank Andrews
- District III Chair: Marlin Ward/ Sarah Timothy (co-chair)
- District IV Chair: Holly Luke
- District V Chair: Debbie Flynn
- District VI Chair: Traci Fuller
- District VII Chair: Caylen Stewart

Amanda Slay mentioned that the Summer Board Meeting would be held at Hoover High School again this summer in the choir room on June 2-5, 2024.

Mrs. Wilson let the board know that Matthew Gardner will remain in charge of the digital side of AVA.

Mrs. Wilson opened discussions about All State 2024-2025. The actual plans for this event have not been decided yet. Mrs. Howze explained how she came about inquiring about the return of All State to Samford University. She expressed that the Arts Recruitment Office wants AVA back.

Amanda Slay and Kristie Howze will be who to speak with in regards to All State plans, communication, and travel for next year.

Mrs. Wilson asked Mrs. Howze to speak to the board in regards to our first federal tax returns. She explained that we hired an accountant to handle the tax returns. Their first bill was \$850. The accountant is having to go back through our quickbooks to take care of all the missed fillings.

Mrs. Howze also spoke to the district chairs in regards to school bookkeepers contacting her as well as principals. She asked if we could put something out about not giving out the Executive Secretaries information to others and that communication should be between her and the choral directors, not her and their bookkeepers/principals. Discussion was also had in regards to late fees and medal orders.

Mrs. Hilan Wilson dismissed at 4:51 pm.