# Board Meeting Minutes

**BOARD MEETING – September 1, 2026**
Lucia Schaefer called the meeting to order at 8:05 PM as an online Zoom meeting.
Quorum (at least 8) was established.

**Attendees Present**:
Charlie Pilzer, *President*
Ayan Kishore, *Vice President*
David Nicholson, *Secretary*
Joel Bluestein, *Treasurer*
Paul Lieberman, *Publications*
Stephan Rochefort-Dyck, *Dance Chair*
Lucia Schaefer, *Past President*
Daniel Greenstein, *At-Large*
Liz Donaldson, *At-Large*
Tim Livengood, *At-Large*
Sherry Lynn Smith, *Membership Chair*

**Absent:**
Betsy Platt, *Program Chair*
Ingrid Gorman, *Publicity*
Jackie Hoglund, *Past Treasurer*

**Guests:**
Charlie Baum
Linda Zebooker
Alexis Ojeda-Brown
Timothy Foley
Mo Brachfeld (office staff)
Milo Pierick (office staff)
Donna Rogall
Zane Potorti

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**Approval of Minutes:**

- MOTION: To approve Minutes from the July 7, 2026 Board Meeting.
  - Vote: Dan Greenstein moved. Stephan Rochefort-Dyck seconded. Approved unanimously.
  - Resolved: The minutes of the July 7, 2026 meeting are approved and entered into the Society records.
- MOTION: To approve Minutes from the August 4, 2026 Board Meeting.
  - Vote: Joel Bluestein moved. Liz Donaldson seconded. Approved unanimously.
  - Resolved: The minutes of the August 4, 2026 meeting are approved and entered into the Society records.

**Open Forum:**

- Dan Greenstein asked whether Girl Scouts could attend a barn dance. The Board welcomed their participation. Dan will give advance notice to the caller regarding the expected number of attendees. The Girl Scouts are considering attending in January.

- Stephan suggested that guests be heard before officer reports, particularly to ensure adequate time for guests.
    - Lucia agreed, and the Board moved Alexis's presentation earlier on the agenda.
- Charlie Baum report on the Getaway
    - The Getaway currently has 52 registered attendees, with several dozen additional attendees expected. Publicity is continuing, including advertising during TradMad week.
    - A $1,000 memorial donation was received; Charlie Baum will send a thank-you on behalf of FSGW.
    - The Board agreed that the Getaway belongs under the Program section of the agenda for the future.

**Black Banjo Reclamation Project (Alexis) collaboration with FSGW:**

- Alexis described the Black Banjo Reclamation Project, including its Maryland chapter, which holds monthly meetings in Baltimore and Hyattsville and has approximately 50 members, with 15–20 people attending monthly.
- The organization seeks opportunities to introduce banjo playing to more Black Americans and is interested in finding experienced instructors, particularly Black instructors.
- Possible FSGW support discussed included:
    - Providing space at FSGW events, including Mini-Fest.
    - Publicity through the FSGW newsletter.
    - Sponsorship at various levels, including non-financial sponsorship involving increased newsletter visibility.
    - Connecting the organization with FSGW's directories of musicians and instructors.
    - Potential instruction at the regular third-Wednesday meetings or through one-time workshops.
    - Funding instructors through grants or FSGW funds.
- Lucia will contact Alexis regarding a possible Mini-Fest opportunity.
- The board will send potential instructor suggestions to Mo who will assemble a list for Alexis.

**REPORTS:**

**President's Report:**

- The President thanked the Board for its work on the Washington Folk Festival.
- The President set an organizational priority to develop FSGW as a folk information hub for the DMV, including increased collaboration with other organizations and improvements to the FSGW website.
- The President also discussed priorities for the coming year's FSGW election, including potential changes to the bylaws and the formation of the Nominations Committee. The Board was asked to recommend a chair for the Nominations Committee.

**Past president's report:**

- The various internal booking lists have been consolidated into a single internal talent directory.

- The public-facing talent directory is intended to serve as FSGW's primary directory for referrals.
    - The Board discussed the possibility of eventually consolidating the internal and public directories.

**Treasurer's Report:**

- Account balances:

| **Fund Name** | **12/31/23** | **12/31/24** | **12/31/25** | **8/31/26** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Vanguard | $150,702 | $176,973 | $202,918 | $222,941 |
| Fidelity | $123,897 | $80,864 | $64,571 | $60,615 |
| Schwab | | | | $889,711 |
| Wells Fargo | $54,327 | $32,667 | $25,057 | $18,930 |
| **TOTAL** | **$328,926** | **$290,503** | **$292,546** | **$1,192,197** |

- The Treasurer reported that total funds as of August 31 were $1,192,197, including the Michael McGinn bequest of approximately $900,000 received in August and deposited into a new Schwab account.
    - Six organizations received funds, including FND and GEPPAC. GEPPAC has requested support for legal expenses in the matter of the bequest. Joel will obtain the amount requested and bring the matter before the Board for consideration.
- The substantial increase in FSGW's assets makes development of an investment policy a priority. Board members interested in participating in the development of the policy will contact Joel.
- FSGW received several grants and significant donations for the Washington Folk Festival, as well as a potential bequest.
- The fiscal year ended August 31. The Treasurer has prepared a draft budget for fiscal year 2026–27 based largely on the previous year's budget. The Board will discuss and revise the budget before approving it.
- Joel will complete the year-end financial report in the coming days.

**Dance Report:**

- Dance Weekends
    - There are currently 72 registered attendees for Contrastock, with additional late registrations expected.
    - Contrastock 2027 is scheduled for September 12, 2027, pending final confirmation from the bands.
    - Registration for Hashdance is open, and a major publicity effort will begin at Contrastock.
- August Dances
    - The August 13 Silver Spring Contra Dance had 52 attendees and two "Next Dance Free" attendees. Net income was -$47.91.
    - Stephan requested access to the English Country Dance doorsheets. Joel will add Stephan to the distribution.

- All Folks Waltz
    - The new All Folks Waltz program is expected to begin in October. The exact start date will be provided for the newsletter.
    - Lucia is working with Katherine and Stephan to finalize the event graphic.
    - Stephan will book the initial schedule for the coming year.
    - A contract has been signed with Lyon Village Community Hall. Payments may be made monthly or quarterly.
- Silver Spring Contra
    - The Board discussed responsibility for securing the hall and booking dances. Stephan will meet with Diane, the new Executive Director of Carpe Diem Arts, to clarify the booking arrangements.
    - Stephan will take the lead on obtaining hall dates and booking bands. The Board also recommended beginning January band bookings early, with an emphasis on two-piece bands.

**Program/Concert Report:**

- Getaway
    - There are currently 52 registered attendees for Getaway, with 12 additional people known to be attending but not yet registered. Publicity efforts are continuing.
    - FSGW received a $1,000 donation in connection with Getaway. Charlie Baum will prepare a thank-you note on behalf of FSGW.
- Concerts
    - The Board is working with Betsy and performers to arrange concerts for the spring months.

**Membership Report:**

- Sherry reported that attendees provided substantial positive feedback about the Washington Folk Festival, including praise for its organization, and that the festival generated significant donations.
- Sherry stated that seeking one-time donations may currently be more effective than conducting a membership drive.
- Mo and Milo reported that membership has not clearly increased since the Folk Festival. They noted that the rolling membership structure makes changes in membership difficult to assess.

**Office Report:**

- Responses to Washington Folk Festival RSVPs indicated that many attendees would like to receive FSGW email blasts. The office will add an email-list opt-in question to future event RSVPs.
- The Board discussed the graphic for the new All Folks Waltz event. A professional-quality image was recommended rather than creating a logo without sufficient time or resources. For the first event, Lucia will coordinate with Stephan regarding photographs of the musicians that could be used as the event image.
- Owen Morrison will join the currently confirmed band member for the upcoming barn dance.

**ACTION ITEMS:**

**Washing Folk Festival 2027 Date Selection**

- The Board discussed potential dates for the 2027 Washington Folk Festival. August was considered preferable because of park availability and a discounted rate, although some performers may have scheduling conflicts.
- MOTION: Liz Donaldson moves to ask GEPPAC for Sunday, August 22, 2027, to hold the Washington Folk Festival. Tim Livengood seconds.
    - Discussion: The Board discussed alternative dates, performer availability, and potential conflicts with other festivals. No strong objection to the proposed date was raised.
    - Vote: Unanimous. The motion carries.
- Joel will send the date request to Emily at GEPPAC, begin negotiating a contract, and release the June date.
- The Board also discussed parking and the possibility of including shuttle buses from the Waverly Street garage in Bethesda in a future festival budget. The possibility of hiring a paid festival director was identified as a longer-term consideration.

**Request for Fiscal Sponsorship: Heartwood Contra Music Workshops**

- Zane Potorti presented a proposal for recurring Heartwood Jam sessions and associated workshops intended to develop local musicians and encourage the formation of new contra dance bands.
- The Board discussed publicity support and potential financial support for future workshops, including the possibility of collaborating with Friday Night Dancers (FND).
- MOTION: Joel Bluestein moves to co-sponsor The Heartwood Jam at the non-fiscal level starting in October 2026. Paul Lieberman seconds.
    - Discussion: The Board discussed the name of the event and the newsletter deadline.
    - Vote: Unanimous. The motion passes.
- Lucia and Mo will prepare a flyer for the event for distribution at the Picnic.
- Zane will provide his flyer for inclusion in the newsletter.
- FSGW will publicize the monthly event through its newsletter.
- Lucia will ask FND to contact FSGW if it is interested in collaborating.

**DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

**Develop an investment policy**

- The Board discussed the need to develop an investment policy in light of the substantial increase in FSGW's assets. Members interested in participating in the development of the policy should contact Joel.

**Draft budget for 2026-27**

- The Board agreed to hold a separate meeting to review and revise the proposed fiscal year 2026–27 budget.
    - Joel will circulate a proposed date for the budget working session.
    - The President clarified that the separate budget review meeting may be conducted as a working session without requiring a quorum.

- MOTION: Joel Bluestein moves that FSGW continue funding its operations at current levels until the budget for fiscal year 2027 is approved. Liz Donaldson seconds.
    - Discussion:
    - Vote: Unanimous.

**Additional Discussion**

- Washington Folk Festival debrief
    - Ayan reports the Festival was a success with 50 bands and over 7500 attendees (1/3rd of which were first-time attendees), many of whom indicated a desire to volunteer for future festivals.
    - Ayan will send out feedback forms to the staff.
- Paul will be out of town during September, and coverage will be arranged.

**Executive Session**

- MOTION: Charlie Pilzer moves to go to executive session at 10:20 p.m. Lucia seconds.
    - Vote: Unanimous.
- The Board entered executive session at 10:20 p.m.
- The Board left executive session at 10:28 p.m.

**Meeting Adjournment**

- Lucia Schaefer moved to adjourn, and Paul Lieberman seconded.
- The meeting adjourned at 10:28 p.m.

The next meeting will be Tuesday, October 6, 2026 at 8pm online via Zoom.