

JEN Conference Board Meeting Tuesday, Jan 6, 2026

Board Meeting

January 6, 2026

9:00 AM - 4:30 PM EST

Held at the Hyatt Regency New Orleans

Attendees:

OFFICERS: President, José Diaz; President Elect, David Kauffman; Immediate Past President, Lonnie Davis; Vice President, Dr. Trineice Robinson-Martin; Secretary, Bethany Robinson;

DIRECTORS: Doug DuBoff, Sara Gazarek, Roosevelt Griffin, Ayn Inserto, Mary Jo Papich, Randal Rossman, Ashley Shabankareh, Todd Stoll, Brian (Legal Counsel), Treasurer, Laura Gentry, Allison Miller,

STAFF: Dr. Lou Fischer; Chief of Staff, Conference Producer, JEN Co-Founder; Jesse Nolan, Director of Programs & Marketing; Jesse Church, Administrative Assistant

Absent: Tia Fuller, Dan Flores, Pharez Whitted

Call To Order 9:14am Jose Diaz, President of JEN

9:14-9:16

AGENDA ITEM- MOTION TO APPROVE MINUTES

BETHANY ROBINSON
SECRETARY

DISCUSSION	January 8th minutes Motion by Todd Stoll, seconded by Randal Rosman June 21 minutes Motion from trineice, second from lonnie Motions passed		
ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE	

9:16-10:00

CONNECTIONS-

JOSE DIAZ
PRESIDENT

DISCUSSION	Board members were asked to comment on JEN, its future, how things are going currently: David - how things will develop as we make NOLA our home Trineice - how JEN will grow Sara - so much energy/intention at JEN, joy to see what's behind the scenes Mary Jo - excited for others to get plugged into a project Allison - excited to be a part of bigger change- particular interest in developing middle school girls/non-binary in jazz Laura - building jazz audiences- taking the artform to where the people are Roosevelt - excited about the impact on young people at the festival
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	Ashley - continued sustainability with staffing and financially- ensuring long-term health and growth Doug Duboff - looking forward to having this at NOLA and all the positives that come with it Randal - hopeful for continued financial stability and how to help grow JEN holistically and keep momentum we have created going Brian - hopeful to make connections, continue to grow, managing risk, keeping JEN safe Todd - continue with renewed focus on education Ayn - hoping for continued financial stability , board involvement, the flagship programs- more awareness of what is happening Bethany - excited for the education committee future Lonnie - to have security for JEN and to execute, for NOLA to see JEN as a part of the city and beloved organization, trusted organization in New Orleans Jose - hopeful for a strategic plan that will plan for unanticipated financial issues,, programming issues, things that will carry us into the future for long term sustainability. Would like to see a transition From a working board to artistic vision with an executive director Tia, Pharez, Dan Flores not in attendance		
ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE	

10:00-10:07 **STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP:** **JOSE DIAZ**
FOCUSING THE BOARD TO MAXIMIZE IMPACT **PRESIDENT**

DISCUSSION	The board discussed maximizing their leadership strategically and worked to answer these questions: Who is the JEN Board? What defines our work? Moving forward, where do we want to grow? What skill sets and interests do we possess that can be leveraged as JEN moves forward? What is the nature of the work of JEN, and how do we as board members plug in?		
ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE	

10:07-10:27 **CHIEF OF STAFF UPDATE** **DR. LOU**
CHIEF OF STAFF

DISCUSSION	Giving badges, update on conference. 3700 pre registrations JJF 70 groups = 2200 400 purchased badges Conference updating as some schedule changes		
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	Wednesday evening's schedule changed as 9pm artist Rachel Thierren was detained by ICE and returned to Canada. Ted Nash will move from 11pm to 9pm to do the Presidential Suite show.	
ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE

BREAK

10:48-11:30

STAFF UPDATE/MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

KELLY
CARSON DIRECTOR OF MEMBERSHIP

DISCUSSION	Kelly Carson, Jesse Nolan Jessie Church Bettyjeane Quimby 4206 current members Full e jen members 2677 Chapters up 7 yJEN 1371, up 56 Corporate 32, down 3 Institution 73, up 5 eJEN & Individual full=2677 total, highest of all time FY26 actual revenue vs. targeted revenue, year to date- 2579 below target, 2 months to go Growth driving goals for FY 27: 1. Currently: Corporate & institution tied to exhibiting 2. Partner with corps who do not exhibit - Continue double-digit growth in memberships - Focus on targeted marketing campaigns 3. Increase Chapter memberships
	Nationwide demographics Membership by region graphic, address not required for membership Will redo the map with geographic areas for review Where board can help: 1. Leverage your professional work a. Personally invite colleagues b. Share membership/forward membership emails 2. Champion JEN in your region a. Identify underrepresented states/regions, universities, state/regional music associations 3. Support corporate/institutional growth a. Introduce JEN to music industry partners, foundations, any who align with jazz education and access 4. Be a visible advocate for JEN- presentations/panels/social media posts 5. Share your personal story a. Why you're a member/how it supports the work/community Questions: Treneice New Membership vs. Retention Sara offered the idea of a Social Media toolkit that could help get the word out en mass

	David mentioned that only a small amount of performers/presenters get things on time to the staff for the conference Those who don't get info to the staff on time create a huge amount of extra work for the staff		
ACTION ITEMS		PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE

11:30AM-12:00PM

DEVELOPMENT REPORT

JESSE NOLAN
Director of Development, Marketing,
& Technology

DISCUSSION	20 sponsored workshops Lanyards sponsored. Check out QR code on back of badge for one stop shopping for schedule, donating, TMF merch booth at registration and in exhibit hall, plaques for performers Numbers: \$23,687 through email for conference/membership registration \$18,212 marketing for every \$1 spent, 3 comes in Marketing budget request- to put more \$ at other events (KMEA because of Louisville), Sponsorship- Cash: Confirmed \$117,750 In Kind: 286,810 Total: \$404,560 First time with over 4,000 attendees Development Campaign: NEXT JEN Campaign Conference Revenue: Budgeted 287,370, 137,664 above budget (cash/sponsorship)		
ACTION ITEMS		PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE

PROGRAM & COMMITTEE REPORTS

1:40-2:07

RISK MANAGEMENT

RANDALL ROSMAN
BOARD MEMBER

DISCUSSION	Wanting to minimize risk, sometimes about changing language when applying for grants From David: the work will not change, but position ourselves to move forward with same expectations
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	Randall: dual purpose- yes. We need to align our asks with their goals. Either make sure everyone is included and we can have our language reflect that- including culture and thought and approaches. Focus on everyone who aligns with the mission. Stay on mission, but be pragmatic about the limitations of wording in this current climate. Jose: Continue the vision and the actions that align with our mission. Brian: have a consensus for changing words. Not much on the website other than one DEI committee on the website- bylaws don't mention much. Todd: changing language could attract more attention than just not changing. Randall: making the biggest tent possible to allow the most people to participate Sara: this topic is worthy of an in person discussion Lonnie: Jesse is the one with perspective on Brian: Strategic Objective #3 on the website under strategic plan Jose: based on Jesse's increase in corporate sponsorships, we may not need to make changes Trineice: will be addressing a new strategic plan in the future January to May is the new audit (Sharon)	
ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
Connect with Jesse on any roadblocks in funding conversations with prospective donors	Randall	As needed

2:07-2:58

FINANCE COMMITTEE

LAURE GENTRY
TREASURER

DISCUSSION	Detail file in govenda: July-March fiscal years Favorable to budget 208k for YTD 12/31/2025 25k herb alpert grant approved 178k favorable to budget driven by: Registration 29k Application fees 14k Sponsorship 107k Exhibit space/rental fee 27k Column B as of dec 31- favorability and unfavorability Most rebates for conference should be in before end of fiscal year Questions about unfavorable numbers with the conference contract budget- A request was made to have Brian review contracts moving forward for extra set of eyes/support for the staff and risk management for organization. January transactions including conference will be reflected 30-60 days after the close of the conference.
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	Cash at end of Dec: \$675,095.73 Accrual process- switching from cash-based to accrual-based accounting reporting, based on the recommendation from last year's independent audit. Account for it ahead of time Then when actual occurs, the accrual can be adjusted Accruals will be zero'd out in March at the end of the fiscal year Todd: question about hyatt points and how to leverage for future use- Mary Jo will check out Laura: in good shape, 13 months of operating funds currently in the bank. Funding needs to be diverse- membership, conference proceeds, grant writing- and beyond to generate a sustainable future	
ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
Contracts going forward should be reviewed by Brian Contracts should be available for full board/lawyer viewing- house in central place (govenda?) Laura will report accrual style vs. cash based moving forward	Anyone with contracts	Before signing

3:00-4:20

COMMITTEES

DAVID KAUFFMAN

	Ayn Inserto Young Composers Showcase, hours put into the adjudication. Ryan Middah and Ayn give feedback to all applicants whether they are selected or not. Ryan has been very dedicated to keeping this afloat. More information/input for and from the board could be needed. Number of applicants 66 Request: for a performing room with a grand piano that is more visible and not opposite of sisters in jazz. Some are big band performances that need a bigger space. Board recommendation: changing the Acceptd form to be a blind audition David: during strategic planning- must make priorities Beyond the conference- only 5 selected, but 66 applied so there are many compositions Commissions- every 2 months member can download a commission. This year 6 commissions, all women second year in a row. Per commission- currently \$750, recommended to increase to \$1000 All charts premiered at the JEN conference
DISCUSSION	

	Ryan & Ayn reach out to composers for the 6 commissions each year. Recommendations: Recordings for the commissions or Young Composers Showcase - Advertise the commissions ahead of time rather than when the conference starts. Mary Jo Papich Community Engagement- Jazz 2U- give grants to schools/community centers- Not functioning since covid. Difficult to get back to schools- sometimes the schools haven't started Starting the conversations in Louisville Still doing webinars JJF: want it to be a great experience. Looking for more board involvement, reporting. Research Under Monika Herzig: High functioning Education: Bethany Robinson Team assembled Waiting for direction for coming year on how to proceed		
ACTION ITEMS		PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE

4:20-4:35

STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP GROUPS

TRINEICE ROBINSON
VP

4:35-4:40

DINNER INSTRUCTIONS & DISMISSAL

David Kauffman
VP

MOTION TO ADJOURN MEETING, MADE BY _____

SECONDED BY _____

MOTION PASSED / NOT PASSED

MEETING ADJOURNED AT _____ EASTERN TIME

