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Board Meeting Highlights, Spring 2011 [1]

The IBMA Board met March 30-April 1 in Nashville to consider a variety of business matters and to hear key committee reports. In addition to the business conducted, the board used the first two days to engage with 20 industry leaders from various constituencies to explore opportunities and challenges facing our music. Following are highlights.

World of Bluegrass

The board adopted a detailed schedule of events for the 2011conference, IBMA Awards and Bluegrass Fan Fest including moving points of event entrance to allow more access for the public to the common areas of the facilities, increased time devoted to music presentation, networking functions and a number of new activities. In a cost saving measure, the Monday evening dinner was eliminated for 2011 and the associated keynote address will be replaced with a special keynote program added to each day. Pricing plans for various packages were simplified and broadly reduced for attendees and exhibitors while also offering new options to purchase single day expo hall and showcase passes in addition to the popular weeklong Music Pass initiated last year. Details will be published in May in advance of registration and ticketing opening in June. The board also eliminated the registration requirement (instituted in 2010) for After Hours performing artists.

Consideration of site selection options and preparing a request for proposals for the events for 2013 and beyond was deferred until later this year.

Surveys

A survey group gave an update on information gathered from members and the broader bluegrass community related to World of Bluegrass week. (A summary and links to the collected responses were published to members in earlier messages). A second survey is being organized to gather input on services and programs offered by IBMA and plans are to conduct it this spring.

Meeting with Leaders

The board participated in a unique planning retreat in advance of the business meeting and invited bluegrass leaders to join in a candid discussion about the opportunities and challenges in bluegrass. The state of the general economy and the fact the music industry confronts a sea-change in business models were at the forefront as was the importance of embracing a broader community for bluegrass while also respecting our music?s core and traditions.

Bluegrass Nation & New IBMA Website

Thanks to progress on an initiative to recruit new Life Members (whose investments will be earmarked to partially underwrite these developments), the board approved funding for a new website for IBMA and World of Bluegrass events. Moreover, this project also includes the creation of Bluegrass Nation which was unveiled at last years conference and in a recent article in this publication. The IBMA and event related sites should debut in May, while the Bluegrass Nation project will take form in late summer with a public launch expected at the 2011 conference.

Finance

The board approved 2010 year-end financial reports prepared by Riney, Hancock & Co., PSC which are summarized elsewhere in this issue. In considering future financial projections, the board adopted a budget of revenues ($794,455) and expenses ($812,110) for July 2011 through June 2012.

IBMA Awards

Appointments of producers for the 22nd annual IBMA Awards Show were made (Stephen Ruffo and Claire Armbruster) in addition to members being named to the Hall of Fame Nominating Committee and Panel of Electors. A proposal to amend show guidelines to mandate inclusion of all ?Entertainer of the Year? nominees in performances was offered and, after reviewing the pros and cons, the consensus was to continue entrusting the producers with the flexibility to determine how best to include nominees from all categories in the show.

Membership

IBMA has 2,134 members as of mid-March 2011 and the membership committee reported on new recruitment efforts including a focus on semi-professionals.

Songwriter Committee

This group is pursuing a proposal that would create a new Songwriter of the Year Award in addition to work on educational and showcase opportunities.

Legislative Information & Awareness

Members reported recent activity including reviewing court ruling and settlements related to copyright owners and SiriusXM, ongoing monitoring of the US Performance Rights Act, Community Radio Bill, anti-piracy proposals and legislation which impacts airline carry-on instrument legislation. The committee also prepared information for membership consideration regarding federal funding of public broadcasting.

Other Business

The board also received reports from all active committees including Showcase Talent Selection, Leadership Bluegrass, Wellness and Special Awards. Discussions also included topics like building attendance at the annual membership meeting, sponsor relations, event exhibitor benefits, official showcase fees and fundraising.

NEXT MEETING AND MORE INFO

Members interested in additional details of this past meeting or with suggestions or ideas for future consideration, are encouraged to contact their board representatives directly or IBMA (info@ibma.org [2] or 1-888-438-4262) for more information. Member input is welcome on any topic of business, and additional information on IBMA and its programs is available at www.ibma.org [3]. The full board will meet again in the fall with the exact dates and place to be determined. Board members serve without compensation and bear their own expenses for attending meetings and other IBMA functions.

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IBMA Board [4]

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