

2025 Western Conference, Tacoma, WA

Agenda, etc. can be found at

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1A2_TBsThFVgetA425nLX9UJ7FRXLmOm5

Day 1: April 4, 2025

Opening remarks

- Land Acknowledgement - President Omdal
- Invocation - Pastor Phil Nesvig
- National Anthems - Dr. Leann Conley-Holcom, Lauren Kastanas, Stephen O'Bent, Jeronimo Thomas, vocalists

Attending the conference are 23 locals, 30 delegates plus several guests

Western Conference Resolution Proposal

Discussed the creation of an online feed for their 2025 conference to facilitate participation of locals unable to attend in person. The motion, proposed by Gary Preston, was amended to clarify that the feed would be for observation only, not voting. The resolution passed, (One nay, Beth Zare), emphasizing it was a temporary measure due to the current political climate and technical capabilities. Concerns were raised about setting a precedent that might discourage in-person attendance.

Movement made to allow guests to stay in the room. Seconded and passed.

- Katie Garrow, Executive Secretary-Treasurer, MLK Labor Council

Katie Garrow highlighted the historical and current contributions of union workers in the Puget Sound region.

- Code of Conduct - Secretary-Treasurer Tammy Noreyko -just pertaining to AFM events
- Communications - Tammy Noreyko

Executive Reports

- Tino Gagliardi, AFM President
- Allistair Elliott, AFM Vice President from Canada

President Tino highlighted the organization's achievements and challenges, emphasizing the impact of the current U.S. administration on international

relations and the entertainment industry. The AFM, with 70,000 members, faces significant issues like visa processing delays and costs, tariffs, and human rights concerns for Canadian musicians. The President praised the solidarity between Canadian and U.S. members and discussed upcoming legislative activities, including the live TV negotiation success. Canadian Vice President Allistair detailed the Canadian office's operations, the impact of U.S. policies on Canadian musicians, and the importance of unity and solidarity amidst these challenges.

Also discussed the challenges posed by generative AI and the need for the AFM to have a unified voice in addressing these issues.

Allistair mentions the upcoming federal election in Canada and the impact of political changes on the AFM's operations.

Suggestion to draft a letter of support/solidarity to all Canadian locals.

Action items

- [] Represent the AFM at the upcoming IFM congress in Geneva in June
- [] Explore solutions to make it easier for Canadian colleagues to cross the border
- [] Provide more details on the new media language in the live TV agreement
- [] Continue the initiative to secure tax credits for motion picture scoring in New York and California
- [] Reach out to Canadian locals to show support and solidarity against the challenges faced by Canadian members

- Ken Shirk, AFM Secretary-Treasurer

Secretary-treasurer Ken Shirk reported on the Federation's staffing updates, including a well-staffed organizing department and a new work group. Membership increased slightly, with 65,000 active members and 52,000 inactive life members. The Federation's financials showed \$25 million in revenue and \$23 million in expenses, with \$19.5 million in untethered assets. Key revenue sources included visa processing fees and compensation for defense expenses. Challenges included finding a replacement for the musical equipment insurance program, which was previously profitable but discontinued. • They had to scramble to find a replacement program, eventually striking a relationship with Hub Insurance Group.

Despite efforts, Hub was unable to find a better program than the one previously offered, leading to a temporary arrangement with the original broker, Amber.

The next convention will be in Ottawa, emphasizing the need for updated passports.

Action items

- ☐ Initiate discussions with a specialty arm of Hub Insurance to explore the feasibility of the Federation self-funding a musical equipment insurance program.
- ☐ Remind members to ensure their passports are up to date before the convention in Ottawa.
- ☐ Encourage members to vote in the upcoming midterm elections.

GET YOUR MEMBERS TO VOTE IN THE MIDTERM!

AFM Department reports

- Steve Pearson, Western International Rep

Steve explains his role as a field staff member, available for contact via text or call. He offers to assist with bylaw questions and directs attendees to the right resources. Steve emphasized his role in assisting with issues and directing queries. Recent negotiations for a successor television agreement, achieving significant gains including grievance procedures, work dues check-off, and new media coverage were mentioned. The Sound Recording Labor Agreement (SRLA) with major record labels is due for renegotiation, with AI being a key issue. Speaker 3 discussed the revitalization of the freelance services department, emphasizing new initiatives, funding opportunities, and the importance of community engagement. The meeting concluded with updates on digital communication tools and insurance programs.

- John Painting, AFM Electronic Media Services Division Director
- Discussed the recent negotiations for a successor television, videotape agreement.
- Achievements include grievance and arbitration procedures, work dues check-off, and new media coverage.
- New health benefits on residuals and artificial intelligence language were also included.
- The process for ratification is ongoing, with hopes to finalize it before the end of the month.

Upcoming negotiations with major record labels for the Sound Recording Labor Agreement (SRLA).

- The SRLA will expire at the end of January, and AI will be a significant factor in negotiations.
- The trend of artists owning their master recordings complicates employment coverage.
- The public television agreement expires at the end of May, with potential issues with PBS.
- Commercial announcements are overdue for renegotiation, with a decline in original session employment.
- Local CBA employers can post clips of live performances to social media with certain conditions.

<https://www.afm.org/emsd-resource-center/> is a good resource

- Wages Argott, AFM Freelance Services Director
- The department offers various resources, and feedback from local officers is encouraged.
- Freelance Bill funding is available, with \$100,000 out of the general fund for initiatives.
- A new initiative involves trade show and conference appearances, with materials available for local use.
- The focus is on fostering a sense of community among freelance musicians.
- In-house web hosting is offered, with support for local website improvements.
- Action Network is introduced as a free tool for mass communication and CRM properties.
- The group insurance Hub offers personal and business lines, including general liability and equipment insurance.
- The business owners policy covers general liability and equipment in a single policy.
- Low-cost equipment insurance is now available, with coverage starting at \$250 a year.
- He offered to speak at local meetings to discuss available resources and initiatives.

Action items

- [] Review the agreement that allows local CBA employers to post clips of live performances to their social media channels.
- [] Explore the Freelance Bill Funding program and consider applying for initiatives in the local community.
- [] Reach out to Gabe Crystal to discuss the new referral service for websites and the Action Network communication tool.
- [] Invite Gabe Krystal to speak at local membership meetings to provide an overview of the Federation's resources and initiatives for freelance musicians.

- Gabriel Krystal, AFM Organizing Department Director

The National Executive Board approved a strategic plan focusing on growth, particularly in the western region. Last year, seven bargaining units were won, adding 100 new members. Efforts are ongoing at True Concord Voices and Symphony, where 59 out of 63 eligible voters signed union cards. The board is pushing for voluntary recognition. Initiatives include supporting independent musicians through workshops and contracts, with pilot programs in Boise, Seattle, Spokane, and Portland. Plans are underway to organize entertainment workers in Las Vegas and form a joint union with CWA for video game workers. Additionally, efforts are being made to organize after-school music programs.

Action items

- [] Develop a strategic organizing plan for your local.
- [] Follow up with colleagues who participated in the local officers training to discuss the organizing plan.
- [] Provide information on where video game scoring work is happening that could be organized.
- [] Attend the July membership meeting in Las Vegas to discuss the union's vision for organizing entertainment workers.

Dan Beck, Music Performance Trust Fund Trustee

Dan's flight was just landing—no report—moved to tomorrow

Member Orientations - Discussion

📌 Seattle has doubled down on orientations.

📌 Another local-Developed a whole script, each person takes one topic. They provide lunch and get to know each other. Power point presentation, includes AFM welcome video. Take pics of new members and post on social media. Spend 60-90 minutes asking them what their membership means to them. By the end they get people signing up for committees, etc.

📌 Local 105 inviting people out. New members that month get together at a bar or restaurant, find out their needs. Introduces new members to the local in a positive environment.

📌 Another local-assign every new member a mentor. Some of these relationships last their entire careers.

📌 Stockton-regional union-it's difficult to get people together. Union Steward gets assigned to the new members. Email and phone calls but getting together physically is difficult

📌 Another local sets up coffee time aligned with a rehearsal where the commuters would be present.

📌 Local 47 Customer testimonials-Why Union?-Have members talk about why they stay in the union. This local uses <https://www.afm47.org/press/whyunion/> to post testimonials.

📌 Another local-Membership orientation program. They emphasize that joining the union is joining a social justice organization.

📌 Allistair -30 minute video on [AFM.org](https://www.afm.org) on "keeping the band together"

📌 Oregon-alternates in person and zoom orientations. Everyone is invited.

📌 Sharon-huge jurisdiction (Houston). Every Wednesday morning have in person orientation then Thursday zoom around time of WC check in. Let folks know they are a part of something and they have a responsibility to reach out to the union for help.

Day 2: April 5, 2025

- Dan Beck, Music Performance Trust Fund Trustee

Discussed the distribution and management of funds by the Western Conference team. Last year, 14 out of 28 locals were optimally allocated, with a 10% increase in annual allocations for the upcoming year. The Goldilocks report indicated six locals overallocated, three underallocated, and 14 optimally allocated. A \$500,000 transfer was made to a Canadian bank to ensure uninterrupted funding. The organization processed 250 grants weekly and plans to hire a new assistant Grant Manager. No changes were announced for the 100% reimbursement events like Jazz Appreciation Month. Challenges with payroll solutions for senior homes persist. Tammy uses a payroll service for the grants.

Action items

- ☐ Explore creating a special terms and conditions form for senior centers to make it easier for them to access the 100% reimbursement funds.
- ☐ Follow up on the idea of a "one-sheet" or brochure that outlines the terms and conditions in a more accessible way for senior centers.

Discuss Political Climate

- Ben Kessler, AFM Director of Government Affairs - (via zoom)

Discussed the impact of recent executive orders on federal cultural agencies, including the elimination of the Institute for Museum and Library Services and the administrative leave of 100 staff at the National Endowment for the Humanities. The Performing Artist Tax Parity Act aims to update the qualified performing artist tax deduction, raising the cap from \$16,000 to \$100,000 for individuals and \$200,000 for joint filers. The American Music Fairness Act seeks to compensate musicians for terrestrial radio plays, facing opposition from the National Association of Broadcasters. The meeting also covered AI and copyright issues, the Protect Working Musicians Act, and potential cuts to the NEA.

Action items

- ☐ Continue to advocate for the Performing Artist Tax Parity Act (PEPPA) to be included in the budget reconciliation process.
- ☐ Maintain the coalition's work on the AM Radio for Every Vehicle Act and its connection to the American Music Fairness Act.
- ☐ Monitor and respond to any potential harmful statements or executive actions from the Trump administration regarding fair use and generative AI.
- ☐ Continue to socialize the Protect Working Musicians Act and seek a Republican co-sponsor.

- Bryan Templeton, Washington State Employment Standards Program Manager (or staff) - WA Labor and Industries

Discussed Washington State's labor laws, focusing on the classification of musicians as independent contractors or employees. The economic realities test, which evaluates control, training, equipment provision, and earning potential, was highlighted. Examples included a burlesque dancer treated as an independent contractor despite having no earning potential outside the venue. The discussion also covered legislative protections for transportation network company drivers and adult entertainers, emphasizing the need for comprehensive protections regardless of employment status. The toolkit for musicians to understand their protections under Washington State's wage payment requirements was mentioned, aiming to inform and protect gig workers.

- The discussion highlights the importance of state laws in providing protections for gig workers, even if they are classified as independent contractors.

- Rochele Skolnick, AFM Special Counsel & Symphonic Services Division Director

She detailed the department's activities in 2024. They assisted musicians in 64 orchestras in bargaining agreements, conducted 23 financial analyses, and revamped wage charts. Scolding highlighted efforts to improve workplace safety and inclusivity, including a new comprehensive code of conduct and the "Not Me" app for reporting misconduct. They also discussed organizing successes, such as representation elections for Opera Idaho and the Rogue Valley Symphony. Scolding emphasized the importance of addressing probationary systems and the need for collective over-scale agreements to combat sexual misconduct and power imbalances.

Action items

- [] Speak about the model standards and procedures for the probationary process at the Officer's Edge presentation on April 15.
- [] Ensure the French version of the model standards and procedures for the probationary process is available on the AFM website.

The discussion continued by highlighting recent Labor Board decisions, including the Bayer County case allowing contract workers to picket and the Southwest Florida Symphony case where the employer violated labor laws. The Lancaster Symphony and Cleveland Orchestra cases confirmed musicians' employee status. The removal of General Counsel Jennifer and board member Gwen Wilcox left the Labor Board without a quorum, affecting its ability to decide cases. The FMCS, crucial for resolving labor disputes, has been significantly reduced in staff. The conversation emphasized the need for unions to take direct action due to government agency defunding and the rise of authoritarianism, advocating for grassroots organizing and strong union advocacy.

Action items

- [] Discuss and plan additional direct actions that the musicians of True Concord can take to exert pressure on their employer and secure union recognition.
- [] Explore the possibility of taking direct action around other government regulatory agencies that are being defunded, such as those responsible for ocean enforcement, environmental protections, and food safety inspections.
- [] Follow up on the speculation about the potential mistake in the removal of the Labor Board members and the implications of this.
- [] Coordinate with the remaining FMCS mediators, including the union's own Barbara Owens, to continue resolving labor disputes through conciliation and mediation.

LUNCH BREAK

- Beth Zare, AFM Diversity Committee Chair - “Recognizing our Privilege to Become Better Allies”

Identifying privilege and becoming better allies to marginalized groups.

Gender equality, privilege, and resistance.

- introduced multicultural awareness to explore issues at a deeper level.
- Privilege is mostly invisible to those who have it, and some men resist gender equality.

Privilege, dialogue, and vulnerability in a workshop setting.

- emphasized importance of vulnerability and openness in dialogue.

Power, privilege, and diversity with a call to action.

- Encouraged listeners to stay curious and use active listening to understand power, privilege, and differences.
- Jane Elliott's video challenges white people to accept the same treatment as black citizens in society, highlighting the importance of empathy and social justice.

Privilege, accountability, and inequality.

- she defines privilege as an unearned or earned advantage based on group membership, leading to unequal access to resources and power.

Being an Ally

Allyship-the practice of emphasizing social justice, inclusion and human rights by members of the privileged or Historically included group, to advance the interests of an oppressed or Historically Excluded group. A ally will mostly engage in activism by standing with an individual or group in a marginalized community.

Advocacy-an activity by an individual or group that aims to influence decisions within political, economic, and social institutions. Advocacy includes activities and publications to influence public policy, laws, and budgets.

Accompliceship- an accomplice will focus more on dismantling the structures that oppress that individual or group-and such work will be directed by the stakeholders in the marginalized group.

Emphasized the importance of being aware of one's own implicit biases and actively participating in the struggle for equality, both by challenging oppressive

systems and amplifying marginalized voices. They stress the need for self-education, listening, and accepting criticism. Key "don'ts" include not expecting to be taught, avoiding comparisons of struggles, not assuming to know best, and not taking credit for others' work. Safety is highlighted as a paramount concern in allyship work, which inherently involves risk.

Action items

- □ Use the tools around you to learn and answer your own questions.
- □ Do the inner work to figure out how to participate in oppressive systems.
- □ Do the outer work to figure out how to change the oppressive systems.
- □ Use your privilege to amplify historically oppressed voices.
- □ Learn how to listen and accept criticism with grace, even if it's uncomfortable.
- □ Do the work every day to learn how to be a better ally.

Practical Do's and Don't's of Allyship

- do research, learning about history, and participate in the work to change oppressive systems.
- use privilege to amplify marginalized voices and learn how to listen and accept criticism.
- don't expect to be taught, don't compare struggles, and don't take credit for marginalized people's labor.
- don't assume that every member of the marginalized community feels oppressed.

Conference Reports

- ROPA - Beverly Setzer
- OCSM - Robert Fraser
- TMA - Heather Boehm (moved to tomorrow)
- RMA - Marc Sazer
- ICSOM - Keith Carrick

OCSM

Winnipeg -regressive contract; otherwise positive with all other orchestras

ICSOM

Keith could not be present. Sent report and Nate read the report. SFO symphony and opera having difficulties

RMA-Marc

Musicians suffered during the LA fires and particularly members of the recording community in Los Angeles area. It was catastrophic for the videotape negotiations that we were actually about to conclude—those negotiations concluded the following month, with a fantastic outcome to those negotiations with improvements to that particular contract.

AFM team negotiated with the TV networks over the late night shows, award shows, sports shows and variety shows that are all covered by that contract.

One of the other areas that RMA has been super active in is around film and television tax credits.

RMA continues to produce educational materials that can really be helpful in a variety of different circumstances. One of the useful AFM contracts is the Independent Festival Film Agreement which allows film scoring to happen for small productions that have budgets of \$2 million or less.

AFM application for membership on both the Canadian and US side has a citizenship question on it. We are essentially asking people's immigration status.

Player Conference council (5 persons) met, created a proposal which was submitted to eliminate that immigration status and citizenship question from the AFM.

ROPA

The leadership of ROPA recognizes the current upheaval in the US as a crucial moment for labor leaders. ROPA aims to equip members with the necessary tools to navigate upcoming challenges. The next conference in Philadelphia (end of July featuring local 77 leaders) will focus on essential topics such as workplace safety and community building. Key agenda items include presentations on bargaining, workplace safety and a panel on community connections.

DEI Guidelines Review

The ROPA executive board is reviewing audition and tenure guidelines developed by the EDI work group. The new guidelines aim to address the unique needs of smaller orchestras within ROPA.

The email listserv has proven to be a valuable resource for delegates enhancing information sharing. The newsletter, The Leading Tone, continues to provide informative updates and features relevant to ROPA orchestras.

Steve's participation at the FEM conference in Sweden highlighted global disparities in orchestra managements and DEI efforts

Countries vary significantly in their policies regarding pay scales working conditions and diversity initiatives.

ROPA has transitioned its conductor evaluation system online, gathering over 200 surveys since 2019.

There are discussions about creating an evaluation database for executive directors to enhance accountability and support post-COVID recovery.

Move and second to accept the letter to send to Canadians that couldn't come. It passed. Everyone at the conference signed the letter. (See attached)

Organizing Targets

Nate led discussion of the intersection of faith organizations and labor movements, particularly focusing on musicians and private educators. It highlights the challenges faced by musicians working in churches, emphasizing the lack of control over their performance choices. The conversation shifts to organizing campaigns within faith communities to support workers, specifically mentioning the collaboration with various labor groups. The introduction of streaming agreements for live performances in houses of worship is explored, detailing how these agreements can benefit both faith organizations and musicians. The current streaming agreement is 20% fee for free live streams for up to 7 days. 40% fee for captured streams kept online for 30 days. If a service wants to keep content longer, they must upgrade to national rates. The importance of addressing employment classification for music teachers is also covered, advocating for fair treatment and potential collective bargaining agreements. Overall, the discussion underscores the need for solidarity among workers in the creative and educational sectors.

LS-1

LS-1: can use same form for a month as long as it's same employer, same venue.

There was much discussion on getting venues (AKA "employers") to sign the form. Discussion involved the pension fund in relationship to the LS-1 form.

Day 3: April 6, 2025

Dr. Richard Antoine White began the meetings with a recap on the demonstration he attended yesterday.

Committee reports

Audit committee (Jim Davies)—all found to be in order

Bylaws (Beth) 3 resolutions

Resolution was proposed focusing on the planning of the upcoming Western Conference, including discussions about location, scheduling, and proposed bylaw amendments. The next conference will take place in San Diego, with ongoing debates about the optimal days for the event considering the schedules of musicians. The conversation hashed out the challenges of balancing union membership requirements with the need for inclusivity and accessibility for non-member musicians. Several resolutions were proposed, including one to ensure that all musicians hired for the conference must be union members, which sparked a debate about the implications for hiring practices in right-to-work states. Participants expressed differing opinions on the necessity and practicality of such requirements, emphasizing the need for flexibility and consideration of local circumstances.

An amendment to the resolutions was proposed to allow flexibility in scheduling future conferences, including the training days, suggesting the wording change to allow the host to choose dates within the last 2 weeks of April. Passed after some discussion.

Second resolution proposed in regards the hiring of union musicians for the conference. This year's musicians were not all members of the union. Concerns were raised about the resolution's applicability to right-to-work states. Allowing necessary exceptions were mentioned. Further discussions on amendments and resolutions will continue in future meetings.

Resolution promoting diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility in the Western Conference and its member locals.

Tempo committee

Ticket Sales and Fundraising: Sold 273 tickets and raised \$1,106.

Diversity

The meeting focused on clarifying the implementation of diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA) in publications and other communications. Amendments to a DEIA resolution were discussed and approved.

- Definition and implementation of DEIA principles in publications and materials.
- The role of constituency groups like PR at Work in promoting inclusivity within the AFL-CIO.
- Amendments to the DEIA resolution to include broad categories such as gender, race, and disability.

- Clarification on DEIA terminology, emphasizing the need for inclusivity in public statements.

The diversity committee discussed the importance of inclusive representation and accessibility, recent executive orders affecting labor, and clean air initiatives. Emphasis was placed on supporting diverse political candidates and improving workplace health standards through better air quality measures. Example, HEPA filters since wind players cannot wear masks.

Action Items

1. Encourage local offices to inform and promote membership in the AFL-CIO affiliate organization – Responsible: Local Offices
2. Distribute the list of recommended inclusive and accessibility qualifiers – Responsible: Diversity Committee
3. Implement CO2 monitoring in labor spaces, focusing initially on areas like the Pacific Northwest – Responsible: Clean Air Subcommittee
4. Promote information on clean air standards and HEPA filters to maintain healthy work environments – Responsible: Health Standards Team
5. Develop communication channels to discuss available clean air options with stakeholders – Responsible: Outreach Coordinator

Key Topics Discussed

- Executive Order 14151: Discussion on its impact and the role of private work organizations like AFL-CIO affiliates.
- LGBTQI Inclusion: Recommendations for local offices to encourage participation and raise voices in labor unions.
- Venue Accessibility: Importance of ensuring inclusive and accessible venues and a list of qualifiers to be developed.
- Clean Air Initiatives: Discussion on the role of CO2 monitoring and clean air protocols, especially in Seattle and beyond.
- Health and Safety Standards: The importance of standardized healthcare safety measures for workers, including the use of N95 masks.

Final items

Elections

President -Tammy

4th VP- Stacy Local 105 Spokane

Memorials/moment of silence

Acknowledgement of the passing of Jimmy B. Nixon.

Installation of Officers

Presentation of Past President's Commemoration

Adjournment