

West Michigan Jazz Society

Board Meeting Minutes

April 26 2025 9:30 AM EST

Google Meet

I. Call to order/Roll Call - 9:36AM

Present: Laura Ohman, Kevin Hubbard, Shannan Denison, Jake Vanderheyden, Jan Basham, Jordan VanHemert, James Sawyer, Jim Reed

Absent: None

Guests: Judah Guerra

II. Approval of minutes from last meeting

Jordan made a motion to approve, Jan seconded. All in favor.

III. Review and Approval of Financials

- A. No financial reports yet.
- B. The last gumbo event did not break even on expenses.
- C. Jim is meeting this week with Michelle to catch up on Quickbooks for 2025. They also are going to work hiring the bookkeeper to continue on forward with this.
- D. Wild Apricot and the insurance is paid, annual fees are done.

IV. New Business

- A. Judah's Proposal - New Album Recording
 - A.1. Judah has asked WMJS to assist with promotion and fundraising for the costs of producing the album in May.
 - A.2. Judah offered to put together a promotion or an educational event.
 - A.3. Judah is attending a master's program and is potentially eligible for a scholarship.
- B. Jazz Bash 2025 at the Stray - Saturday July 19th
- C. Mission Statement - board members should all review
 - C.1. Acronym to remember: "AUS ... PPE" - The mission of the WMJS is to advance, uphold, and sustain live jazz in West Michigan through promotion, performance, and education.

V. Old Business

- A. Speaking of Jazz - Jordan to interview Elgin Vines
- B. Future of WMJS - in light of recent news of jazz venues and festivals closing in West MI
 - B.1. Strategic planning for community involvement. Possibly June or July.
- C. 2025 MOY and Award Event
 - 1. Rick Reuther won the membership vote for MOY and was announced on FB live and Shannan contacted all nominees and Rick via email.
 - 2. MOY party will be on September 30th.

3. Committee meeting will be led by Shannan and Laura until an outside chair will lead it.
 4. Jim and Peni are jazz ambassadors for this year.
 5. We need submission of videos for Rick and Jim/Peni for the video at the event.
- D. WMJS Annual Budget Process
- D.1. Jake recommended zero based budgeting is implemented by the board. A budget should be in place for the next calendar year by the board meeting in November each year so that there is time to organize and distribute the budget in December.
 - D.1.a) Article here: <https://www.investopedia.com/terms/z/zbb.asp>
 - D.2. Shannan motioned to approve; all in favor.
 - D.3. This needs to be worked on during strategic planning.
- E. Visa Letter for Ivan Akansiima
- E.1. Shannan offered to write this letter as the president. He emailed his thanks and will let us know.
 - E.2. Shannan has not heard back yet.
- F. Calendar and Meeting Dates for 2025
- F.1. Remaining Board Meetings: May 31, Jun 28, Jul 26, Aug 23, Sep 27, Oct 25, Nov 22
- G. Robby Fischer, Owner, Dogtown Studio
- G.1.a) Shannan is working with Robby to produce videos for upcoming WMJS events such as the fundraiser, awards, and Jazz in the Park.
 - G.1.b) Robby is very excited to help WMJS, it has been a good partnership.
- H. Jazz in the Park
- H.1. Lineup
 - H.1.a) The board determined that since the 4th of July is a Friday, that there does not need to be a bye week for 2025.
 - H.1.b) Three rain dates - Aug 11, Aug 18, and Aug 25
 - H.1.c) Jordan is still working on the lineup.
 - H.2. Band Shell
 - H.2.a) Dimensions have been submitted based on WMJS recommendations.
 - H.2.b) Jim thinks it is unlikely that their board will have this completed in 2025.
 - H.3. Food Trucks need to be contacted.
 - H.3.a) Laura is looking into adding an additional new vendor.
 - H.4. Non-profit collaborators need to be contacted.
 - H.5. Payment for musicians - \$150 per musician is needed as a minimum for WMJS for jazz combos at all .
 - H.5.a) Jake motioned to approve; Kevin seconded. All in favor.
 - H.6. Sponsors - recruitment is needed.
 - H.6.a) Shannan has all the documents created. They need to be promoted and distributed.

I. Monday Night Jazz Gumbo – Casino Club

I.1. Remaining Dates for 2024-2025 season

I.1.a) Jordan will confirm with Kathy about the rescheduled date. Shannan has contacted her.

I.1.b) **WMJS Monday Night Jazz Booking**

Dates	Group Name
Rescheduled to May 19, 2025	Kathy Lamar

VII. Volunteer Celebration to be held a La Bonne Sante on Lake Michigan but on a WARM DAY.

A. Shannan was thinking of having the event in May. Possibly the weekend of May 18th, mid afternoon.

B. Jazz trio needed for the event. Judah may be available, Shannan will follow up.

VIII. Committee Updates

J. Nominating Committee - chair Kevin Hubbard

J.1. More Board Member Nominations are needed.

J.1.a) Shannan noted that we really need to focus on recruiting quality board members with specific requests for joining to work on certain projects.

J.1.b) Board can be up to 12 people, with 2 leaving, that leaves the board with 6 members in June 2025.

J.2. Jake and Jim are leaving the board in June 2025 due to term limits. Backfills are needed for Treasurer, Secretary, and Marketing/Communications.

J.3. Work is needed on the board matrix again. Shannan sent out a board matrix file.

K. Jazz Program Committee – chair Jordan VanHemert

K.1. Jazz in the Park lineups are in progress for 2025.

K.2. Jordan is still manually sending out contracts and W9 forms. Jordan will check with Michelle about Quickbooks.

K.3. Contracts would be helpful to have digitally signed.

L. Treasury Committee – chair Jim Reed

L.1. Planned Estate Giving – Shannan Denison - no update

L.2. Mitten Foundation Charity Partnership Application - Michelle Needham - no update

L.2.a) Shannan just spoke with someone at the foundation at an event.

M. Marketing/Communications Committee – chair Jake Vanderheyden

M.1. Michelle has the jazz society phone still, Laura is going to take it over after quickbooks implementation .

M.2. May Newsletter will soon be in distribution with Donna.

M.3. Calendar should only include West Michigan events

M.4. Jake will work with Shannan/Laura on to the Instagram page. The board discussed the importance of posting more short form videos of our events and to feature musicians/venues.

N. Membership Committee – chair Laura Ohman

N.1. Sam Needham is checking for new members but it is currently caught up.

N.1.a) Need to confirm email Sam is using, should be membership@wmichjazz.org on all accounts and communication.

N.2. Volunteer appreciation event should also help to recruit new volunteers and assign roles. Once the event is set, an email will be sent out to all members.

N.3. Membership is still low vs. our prior peak of membership before the pandemic.

N.3.a) Another mass email reminder will be sent out along with MOY voting.

O. Scholarship Committee – chair Jim Reed with Michelle Needham

O.1. No updates.

P. Education Committee – chair James Sawyer

P.1. Need to setup the education@wmichjazz.org email account for this.

P.2. [James Sawyer](#) has provided educational opportunities with small jazz ensembles with St. Cecelia's. Maybe partner with them. How to identify elementary schools that NEED music programs. James will discuss with the music supervisor with the district.

P.3. Kent District Library - History of Jazz series, tabled

P.3.a) Kurt could be considered for this also.

VI. Adjournment 11:20 AM

Jake motioned to adjourn; Jan seconded. All in favor.

Next Board Meeting is May 31st, 2025