

Bluegrass Music Association of Maine Board Member Guide

Congratulations! You are a member of our board. As part of your orientation, this guide provides an introduction to the Bluegrass Music Association of Maine (referred to as BMAM) and a guide to board service. We hope this will assist you as a new board member in becoming comfortable in your new role. Please do not hesitate to reach out to the Board President, Board Chair or another board member with questions or for support.

Bluegrass Music Association of Maine History and Purpose

BMAM was started in 1995 & incorporated as a 501-c non-profit in 1996. Over the years, many Maine bluegrassers have served as board members and officers. Besides loving bluegrass music, they all thought it important to get involved and give back to their bluegrass community, just like you are doing now.

The purpose of the Bluegrass Music Association of Maine as outlined in our BMAM bylaws:

- (a) To educate the public about bluegrass music, in order to foster an appreciation of its history and cultural heritage
- (b) To further the enjoyment of Bluegrass music, for ourselves and others, through teaching, sharing, and playing;
- (c) To encourage participation in Bluegrass music events;
- (d) To promote Bluegrass music as family entertainment;
- (e) To support area workshops, festivals and concerts;
- (f) To support area musicians and bands that play Bluegrass music;
- (g) To inform members about Bluegrass and related events around the state;
- (h) To cooperate with other organizations to promote Bluegrass and related music;
- (i) To preserve the memories of those who have preceded us in this field of endeavor.

Statement of Purpose

This organization was formed out of the love for BLUEGRASS music and to promote local Maine bands.

BLUEGRASS is a term that has been applied to a wide variety of music. While exact definition may vary among people who consider themselves BLUEGRASS fans or musicians there would be little disagreement over this broad one. BLUEGRASS is recognized as a unique musical form, a music in which singers accompany themselves with ACOUSTIC rather than electric instruments, bringing together amateur and professional musicians as well as devoted fans who believe in and support this great music called BLUEGRASS.

BLUEGRASS music was stylized and expanded by other great pioneers such as: Bill Monroe, The Stanley Brothers, Flatt & Scruggs, Jim & Jesse, Reno & Smiley, Osborne Brothers, Mac Wiseman, Jimmy Martin, Country Gentlemen, Lilley Brothers & Don Stover – to name just a few.

BLUEGRASS music was developed from Folk, Mountain and Old-Time Southern String Band Music of the 1900's. Early entertainers such as the Monroe Brothers, Blue Sky Boys, Delmore

Brothers, J.E. & Wade Mainer, Clayton McMichen and many, many others, helped to lay the foundation and create the atmosphere that allowed BLUEGRASS music to be born.

We intend to preserve, promote and maintain the integrity and roots of this great Acoustic string band music called BLUEGRASS here in the State of Maine.

Board members should be aware of our purpose as well as the benefits of being a BMAM member. It is our responsibility to encourage membership.

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS:

- Quarterly Newsletter
- Discounts to BMAM Sponsored Events and Partnerships
- BMAM Sticker
- BMAM Card
- Access to Exclusive Membership Events
- Exclusive Access to our Member Forum
- BMAM website for Band Listings, Bluegrass Events, Bluegrass News
- Ability to serve on Committee and run for BMAM Board and Office

BMAM is a member of the **International Bluegrass Music Association**. www.ibma.org

Board Responsibilities

Board members have fiscal responsibility and general oversight of the operations of BMAM. They help to raise funds and also represent our members and viewpoints.

The board's responsibilities fall into the following broad categories:

- **Legal & Fiduciary** – The board is responsible for ensuring that the organization meets legal requirements and that it is operating in accordance with its mission. It is also responsible for protecting the organization's assets.
- **Oversight** – The board is responsible for ensuring that the organization is well run. It moderates the power of management and has the power to appoint and remove the chief executive, for BMAM that is the president.
- **Fundraising** – Board members raise money, and serve as advocates for the organization to potential donors as a part of their responsibility to ensure the financial viability of the organization.
- **Representation of Constituents and Viewpoints** – Often, board members are chosen to bring the experience or perspective of the organization's constituents to the board.

One of the first questions asked by many board candidates is "What do I have to do?"

Attend Meetings

- Board members are expected to make all the monthly board meetings on the 2nd Wednesday of each month @ 6:00pm. On average, meetings last 1 1/2 to 2 hours. (Note: For 23 years board members traveled to meet personally until the pandemic hit

and we started meeting via Zoom. We love the convenience of it with the savings on time & travel.)

- Board Members are expected to read the minutes from the previous meeting and make notes if there are edits needed, etc. You will also receive the agenda for the upcoming meeting. If there is something you would like discussed at the next meeting ask the chair to list it under new business.
- You'll receive a link to Zoom prior to the meeting. The meeting always starts at 6:00 pm sharp but the informal meeting starts at 5:30 pm for anyone that wants to chat or needs technology assistance. We always need a quorum of six board members (out of 10) to make the meeting official and get motions passed. This is why we need everyone to attend. If we do not have a quorum we can't get our work done. Please do all you can to not schedule anything for the evening of our board meetings.
- Everyone that attends meetings likes to see the meetings run quickly, smoothly and efficiently. We work our way down the agenda listening to the officers & committee reports. Then we move to new business followed by old business. The board chair runs the meeting per Robert's Rules of Order (please see attached) and recognizes anyone with their hand raised to speak. The agenda is the roadmap for the meeting however, input is encouraged. The meetings are amiable. We respect each other, are polite & support each other.
- See sample agenda in the Appendix

Committees

It is expected that board members should serve on a committee or two.

Our committees include:

Archive Committee: The Archive Committee compiles photos and documentation of Maine bluegrass history. The collection is the result of years of work, donations and the collaboration of many people. The documentation of Maine's rich bluegrass history is vital in understanding and learning the roots of how our favorite music got started and its progression through the years. This committee also maintains a partnership with the Maine Country Music Museum where bluegrass music has a strong representation.

Booth Committee: BMAM's major fundraising at this time is through merchandise sales at several Maine Bluegrass Festivals. The Festival Booth Committee is responsible for coordinating the overall operations of the booth. They work with festival promoters, order inventory, set prices, and manage the overall logistics of the booth, including recruiting volunteers and providing orientation.

The Festival Booth Committee chair provides the Board with monthly updates and works with the Board to assure that the booth is run professionally and assets are safeguarded.

Bylaw Committee: The BMAM Bylaw Committee is tasked with periodic review of the Bluegrass Music Association of Maine Bylaws to assess if the Board is adhering to the general parameters laid out in the document and/or if there is a need to amend the

bylaws. The bylaws of the Bluegrass Music Association of Maine, a 501©3 organization, contain provisions related to the ways BMAM conducts its affairs, the duties of its directors and the responsibilities of its officers. It is a living document that allows for amendments to the bylaws if needed. Of course, any amendments must be reviewed by the Committee, reviewed by the Board, and presented to the membership for approval.

Education Committee: The Education Committee, at this time, works with festival promoters in the State to provide programs such as the kids academy, beginner workshops, and jams.

Fundraising: (Inactive) The Fundraising Committee is responsible for brainstorming new ways to raise funds and evaluating opportunities that are presented to us. Much of the BMAM annual income is derived from selling merchandise at our information booth at Maine Bluegrass Festivals. Funds are also raised at our monthly jams at Brewer & North Yarmouth between September & May. Current plans also include the launch of the Play It Forward program to help boost membership & funds. Additional funds are sometimes raised from an instrument raffle or the sale of tapes/ CDs, vinyl records collections donated by members. New fundraising ideas are always welcome.

Jam Committees: (Eastern and Southern): BMAM currently operates two jams, one in Brewer and one in No. Yarmouth. The committee works within the community to locate an appropriate venue, provides publicity, and recruit volunteers as needed. BMAM has standard Event Forms that are completed and provided to the Treasurer and each month the Jam Committee Chairs submit a report to the Board.

Nomination and Election Committee:The Nomination & Election Committee, per the bylaws, shall include two persons from the current Board and two persons from the general membership. This committee shall oversee the election process, including tracking the terms of the Boards and President, overseeing the recruitment of potential Board members and Presidents, and presenting a slate of proposed Directors and nominees for President to the Board of Directors for approval. The Committee then assures printing, mailing, receipt and verification of ballots within the timeline outlined in the bylaws, and informs the President of election results for communication to the membership at the Annual Meeting. The Nomination & Election Committee shall turn the results and the ballots over to the Secretary to be kept for inspection, if needed, for a period of one year. The ballots shall otherwise remain confidential.

Newsletter Committee: The newsletter editor produces the quarterly newsletter, called the Bluegrass Express, that is provided to all BMAM members. Each quarter articles and items of interest are solicited and reviewed for inclusion. The committee proof reads and the editor works with the printer to publish. The final newsletter is then delivered to membership via email or USPS.

Strategic Planning Committee: This committee was formed in 2022. This committee is charged with charting a course for BMAM as we move forward. The committee began looking at our organization's Mission Statement and Statement of Purpose; evaluating

our progress; determining our goals and our next steps. The committee developed the New Board Member Orientation. The committee will be looking at succession planning for board members and officers. The planning includes identifying the BMAM's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. By analyzing the internal and external environments, the strategic planning committee can help the board identify risks and challenges. This information will help the board establish priorities and set goals.

Website and Social Media Presence Committee: This committee, sometimes referred to as the On-line Presence Committee is responsible for working with our webmaster to keep the BMAM website up to date and relevant. They also maintain our Facebook and Instagram Accounts. They are responsible for increasing BMAM's online footprint, through additional platforms such as YOUTube, Spotify, and others. The committee has also recently launched a BMAM Members only Forum.

Volunteer

Besides attending meetings and partaking in discussions, you'll be expected to help out in a variety of ways. BMAM is a small organization with no paid staff. The Board picks up many duties related to the operation of the organization. Members are also recruited to help out as well.

We have more than enough people to suggest what should be done but finding the volunteers to carry it out is the key. BMAM always needs help administratively, at our jams & booths, festivals, etc. A presence of board members at bluegrass events is necessary to recruit membership, promote bluegrass, and fulfill our purpose.

Representation

As a board member, you represent the Bluegrass Music Association of Maine. Our goal is to grow BMAM membership and support the mission of the association.

A reminder that bad behavior at any BMAM function could be reflected on our organization. Also, any behavior that is in poor taste outside of BMAM functions could have repercussions for BMAM. Keep in mind. As a BMAM board member you represent the Bluegrass Music Association of Maine. Note that your behavior at any BMAM function and social media reflects on our organization. Our goal is to provide a positive image and we work hard to help Maine bluegrass grow.

Appendix-

- 1. Conflict of Interest**
- 2. Sample Agenda**
- 3. Robert's Rules of Order**
- 4. By-Laws**
- 5. Board Directory**

APPENDIX 1

BMAM Conflict of Interest Statement

A conflict of interest is defined as an actual or perceived interest by a board member in an action that results in, or has the appearance of resulting in, personal, organizational, or professional gain. Officers and members are obligated to always act in the best interest of the organization. This obligation requires that any officer or member, in the performance of organization duties, seek only the furtherance of the organization mission. At all times, officers and board members are prohibited from using their job title or the organization's name or property, for private profit or benefit.

- A. The officers and members of the organization should neither solicit nor accept gratuities, favors, or anything of monetary value from contractors/vendors. This is not intended to preclude bona-fide organization fund raising-activities.
- B. No officer, or member of the organization shall participate in the selection, award, or administration of a purchase or contract with a vendor where, to his knowledge, any of the following has a financial interest in that purchase or contract:
 - 1. The officer or member;
 - 2. Any member of their immediate family;
 - 3. Their partner;
 - 4. An organization in which any of the above is an officer, director or employee;
 - 5. A person or organization with whom any of the above individuals is negotiating or has an arrangement concerning prospective employment.
- C. Disclosure— Any possible conflict of interest shall be disclosed by the person or persons concerned.
- D. Board Action—When a conflict of interest is relevant to a matter requiring action by the Board, the interested person(s) shall call it to the attention of the Board and said person(s) shall not vote on the matter. In addition, the person(s) shall not participate in the final decision or related deliberation regarding the matter under consideration. When there is a doubt as to whether a conflict exists, the matter shall be resolved by vote of the Board, excluding the person(s) concerning whose situation the doubt has arisen.
- E. Record of Conflict—The official minutes of the Board shall reflect that the conflict of interest was disclosed and the interested person(s) did not participate in the final discussion or vote and did not

APPENDIX 2

Sample Board Agenda

BMAM Board Meeting Agenda – via ZOOM

Call to Order: 6 pm

Minutes of last meeting: Minutes will not be read aloud if members received & read them prior to the meeting.

Motion to accept, discussion, vote

Officers Reports:

Chairman:

President:

Secretary:

Treasurer:

Motion to accept, discussion, vote

Committee Reports:

Newsletter:

Online Presence:

Fundraising Committee:

Southern/Eastern Jam Committee:

Nomination/Election Committee:

Festival Booth Committee:

Play It Forward Committee:

Strategic Planning Committee:

Motion to accept, discussion, vote

Old Business:

New Business:

Time Adjourned: _____ **Next meeting:**

APPENDIX 3

Robert's Rules of Order

Robert's Rules of Order, which is also widely known as parliamentary procedure, was developed to ensure that meetings are fair, efficient, democratic and orderly. A skilled chairperson allows all members to voice their opinions in an orderly manner so that everyone in the meeting can hear and be heard. The following [tips and reminders](#) will help chairpersons to run a successful and productive meeting without being run over or running over others.

- Follow the agenda to keep the group moving toward its goals.
- Let the group do its own work; don't over command.
- Control the flow of the meeting by recognizing members who ask to speak.
- Let all members speak once before allowing anyone to speak a second time.
- When discussions get off-track, gently guide the group back to the agenda.
- Model courtesy and respect, and insist that others do the same.
- Help to develop the board's skills in parliamentary procedure by properly using motions and points of order.
- Give each speaker your undivided attention.
- Keep an emotional pulse on the discussions.
- Allow a consensus to have the final authority of the group.

All board members should be familiar with *Robert's Rules of Order*.

Robert's Rules of Order Motion Steps

1. **Motion:** A member raises a hand to signal the chairperson and states name and the motion.
2. **Second:** Another member seconds the motion. Again, please state your name for the benefit of the secretary.
3. **Restate motion:** The chairperson restates the motion.
4. **Debate:** The members debate the motion.
5. **Vote:** The chairperson restates the motion, and then first asks for affirmative votes, and then negative votes.
6. **Announce the vote:** The chairperson announces the result of the vote and any instructions. You can read more about the motion [steps here](#).

TIP! If the board is in obvious agreement, the chairperson may save time by stating, "If there is no objection, we will adopt the motion to..." Then wait for any objections. Then say, "Hearing no objections, (state the motion) is adopted." And then state any instructions.

If a member objects, first ask for debate, then vote and then announce the vote.