

**2018 NAFC CONVENTION
MONTREAL, CANADA
October 20-21, 2018
MINUTES**

Meeting Commenced at: 09h10

Grainne Ni Chonchubhair – Opening words of Welcome

National Anthem

Helen Gannon of St. Louis Irish Arts instructed all those in attendance the pronunciation of the Irish National Anthem in the Irish language followed by singing the Anthem. Helen encouraged that all Feis make a point of teaching the Anthem to their dancers so that there is a continuance of the Irish language and the price of singing the Irish National Anthem at various events.

Opening Prayer – Host Patrick Short

Convention Schedule Overview – Host Patrick Short

Patrick went over the schedule of events for the next two days

Introduction of the Board of the NAFC

Jeri Hagan, NAFC Chairman of the Board of Directors, Past NAFC President
Edward Hansberry, Past NAFC President, NAFC Vice Chairman, Hall of Fame Chair.
John Glynn, Past Chairperson of the Board, Past NAFC President, Member of the Board
Joan Preece, Past NAFC President, Member of the Board
Patricia Dwyer, Past NAFC President, Member of the Board,
Tom Blake, Past NAFC President, Member of the Board
Anne Gervin, Past NAFC President, Member of the Board, Chairperson Music Scholarship
Pat Short, Past Chairman of the Board of Directors, Member of the Board, Syllabus Liaison
Patricia Watkins, Past NAFC President, Member of the Board
Lori Seeman, NAFC President
Mary Kemock – NAFC Vice President
Michael Ferrell, NAFC 2nd Vice President
Sharon Murphy, NAFC Treasurer
Teresa Buck – NAFC Secretary
Donna Genthe – NAFC Registrar
Shannon Dayringer – NAFC Media Director
Hellen Gannon, Member of the Board, Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Eireann
Tom Gervin, Sergeant at Arms
Russell Beaton – IDTANA President, An Coimisiún Vice President, Member of the Board
Grainne Ni Chonchubhair for Francis Curley, CLRG Chairperson, An Coimisiún, Member of the Board

Rules of the Convention:

Tom Gervin is the Sergeant at Arms

President, Lori Seeman stated the rules of the convention. They were:

- 1) Discussions on any one subject is limited to 10 minutes.
- 2) Each person can only speak once on an issue until everyone who wishes to speak on that issue have had their turn.
- 3) Each Feis only has one vote
- 4) Microphone must be used.

Motion to Accept Agenda

Motion to accept Agenda: Mr. Ed Hansberry

Seconded by: Jeanne Farrell

Motion: Carried

2017 Convention Minutes

Motion to accept the 2017 Convention Minutes: Mr. Ed Hansberry

Seconded by: Ms. Nora Smith

Motion: Carried

President, Lori Seeman thanked everyone for coming and asked for a moment of silence in memory of: Áine Ui Shé, and any others who have departed. The President thanked Patrick Short for coordinating the convention. She also thanked everyone for their support and kind words during her presidency. A special thanks to Jeri Hagan, NAFC Board of Directors Chairperson, for her guidance throughout her presidency.

Correspondence

Mr. James Early requested a letter written by Ellen Riordan of the Verlin School of Irish Dance be read as part of general correspondence. President, Lori Seeman proceeded to read the letter out loud to all those present. It was in regard to the concerns expressed by Ms. Ellen Riordan, ADCRG of the Verlin School of Irish Dance whereby a school will host more than one feis per year within the same region. This is affecting the success of other feis running their event simultaneously (see letter attached).

Lori Seeman indicated that this is not an isolated problem it has been expressed in other areas as well. She further indicated that this was not the place to discuss this matter, but it would be reviewed with the IDTANA and CLRG in January. It will be an ongoing discussion for a while so there is nothing we can immediately do at this time. Any changes need to be discussed and approved by NAFC, IDTANA and CLRG according to the tripartite agreement.

Jeanne Farrell asked the question: - Is there not a practice in place that a new Feiseanna must call or send a letter to inquire if their request for a Feis would be an impact on the other Feis around? Donna, the Registrar responded to the question by saying that for a new Feiseanna she reaches out to everyone in the region for the scheduling of their activities running either on the same day and within a 200 miles radius, to eliminate conflict of dates.

Mary Woods asked if Donna was only contacting those who may have a Feis on the same day but what about those that have them on the same weekend are they contacted as well? Donna confirmed that she is contacting people not for just on the same day but for the weekend.

Megan Hickey from the Bob Gabor CNY Feis appreciated the letter was read and that it was a good place at this convention to talk about it, because every Feis is trying to do a good job and this problem does put a lot of constraints when there are several Feiseanna on a weekend. There are not enough musicians to cover all these Feiseanna on a weekend to make each a successful event. We need to put something in place to give the most opportunity for each feis to be a successful and profitable event or there will be Feiseanna that will be forced to close.

Jeri Hagan, Chairman of the Board stated that in a statistical stand point every Dance teacher wants to run a Feis and we do have a finite number of weekends. However, we do have a duty to keep the Feis Association alive, we have the NAFC, IDTANA and C.L.R.G. We have a contract and we assure that children who dance in the year's events must be registered with the IDTANA. All three bodies will be meeting to discuss this important issue. After the 1st of the year we will come together to make a reasonable understanding of how to solve the problem. We acknowledge that there is a problem and it will be worked on this year.

Nancy Woods appreciated that the subject matter was being discussed at this convention because the Southern Region which Nancy was from, is so large that if they had back to back Feis in Oct. and Nov., the attendance would be very low. It's not just the day or weekend but it's also the weekend before and the weekend after. The 200 miles radius does not work for the Southern Region because of the financial strain to get to all the Feiseanna due to their distance of 200 miles and more. Another solution would be required for the larger areas such as the Southern Region that are more than the 200 miles radius.

Sean Kilcoin from Detroit International Feis would like to suggest that given the nature of the situation the issue is do we have too many Feiseanna? It seems we may very well be coming to a saturation point financially and in organizational we might want a moratorium. There is a responsibility of this organization to make sure that each Feis is surviving economically those existing and those who are new. The Moratorium needs to be done soon to have a limit of how many Feiseanna we have.

Geraldine Murray of the Western US is larger than Southern Region and we make sure that all our Feiseanna are surviving. A sub region cannot have another Feiseanna within a few weeks of each other. Sub regions should be considered. A TCRG must be involved with the Feis.

James Early, from New Jersey has been a recipient of an email asking: How often can they request a date change? Can a Feis apply for a temporary date change every year or is it just a one time?

Registrar, Donna said theoretically they can have a request for temporary change every year. She is more mindful of those that request every year and she contact them to say they can't request a change every year.

People can request but the Registrar decides if the request will be accepted or not after a thorough investigation of all criteria.

NAFC Championship Reports – Pat Watkins

Held the 2018 in Phoenix, Arizona – wonderful venue with a lot of brilliant dancers. Every competitor was announced by name at the ceremony.

Each went home with a group photo, event badge and adjudicator comments

Adjudicators:

Sally Houston
Noelle Curran
Michael Fitzpatrick
Julie Showalter
Mary McGinty
Bernadette Short

Musicians:

Tony Rutherford
Linda Rutherford
Ryan Duns

Gerry Campbell Senior Belt: 20 Competitors

Gerry Campbell Senior Belt Winner

SAOIRSE DEBOY
TEELIN SCHOOL OF IRISH DANCE, MARYLAND

Top Six Dancers in the Gerry Campbell Senior Belt:

Noel Spillane, Golden School of Irish Dance, New York
Orla Godley, Mullane-Godley Academy, Illinois
Londyn Nachtigal, Mattierin School, Alberta
Nate Schutte, Butler Fearon O'Connor, California
Saoirse DeBoy, Teelin School, Maryland

Robert Gabor Junior Belt – 34 Competitors

Robert Gabor Junior Belt Winner

*OLIVIA NACHTIGAL
MATTERIN SCHOOL, ALBERTA*

Top Six Dancers in the Robert Gabor Junior Belt:

Grace Reynolds, Cleary School, California
Tadgh Spillane, Lavin-Cassidy, Illinois
Olivia Nachtigal, Matterin School, Alberta
Megan Stuart, Corda Mor, Minnesota
Peyton Schroter, Matterin School, Alberta
Maya Coyne, Butler Fearon O'Connor, California

George Sweetnam Minor Belt – 26 Competitors

George Sweetnam Minor Belt Winner

*LAUREN WOODBECK
KNOCK SCHOOL, ALBERTA*

Top Six Dancers in the George Sweetnam Minor Belt:

Jessie Armstrong, Cleary School, California
Lauren Woodbeck, Knock School, Alberta
Riana MacDermott, Heritage Dance, New Jersey
Christina Mariel Wiltz, McGough Academy, New York
Jake McEntyre, Cleary School, California
Catherine McDaniels, Lavin-Cassidy, Illinois

The Peter Smith Minor Ceili Competition Winner

*CLEARY IRISH DANCE
CALIFORNIA*

The Peter Smith Junior Ceili Competition Winner

*HERITAGE IRISH DANCE ACADEMY
NEW JERSEY*

The Peter Smith Senior Ceili Competition Winner

*CLEARY IRISH DANCE
CALIFORNIA*

The 2019 Championships will be held at the Crowne Plaza Resort Northeast in Sacramento, California on January 19, 2019. The John Kennelly Memorial Feis will be held at the same location the next day on January 20, 2019.

A majority of the stage, adjudicator and musician costs will be shared

Karyn Oster, indicated her Feis is on the same day on January 20th going further can the NAFC check with other Feiseanna to see when their Feis will be so there is no conflict.

Nelson Martin, Rose & Shamrock trying to come up with a 3-year sequence so there is stability and move the championships around to give an opportunity to other regions.

The NAFC Championships are run in conjunction with the IDTANA Mini Convention in hopes to share some of the costs. We are always looking for a feis to run in conjunction with the championships so that adjudicator and musician costs can be shared.

Catherine Hogan from U.I.C. & Flynn asked what was the entry count for the Ceili Championship. Pat Watkins indicated that this was the first year, so it was low: 1 in Minor, 2 in Junior and 3 in Seniors

2019 Music Scholarship - Ann Gervin

Ann went through the details of the Scholarships.

(Please see attached report for complete details)

Ann introduced the committee: Anne Gervin, Helen Gannon, Mary Bryan, Geraldine Murray, Ryan Dunns and Michael Fitzpatrick

Reason for the Music Scholarship and why we run this event. The Music Scholarship was to encourage more musicians to enter so that they can someday become a feis musician. We came up with the idea of having a student musician play for a dancer which was challenging for them but gave us a much better idea of how they played as opposed to a written format. We made the change to this format in 2011.

Ann asked if everyone would consider hiring these new musicians to encourage them to pursue a career in accompanying dancers. Paying them a stipend of \$25.00 an hour for the length of time will give them an incentive and will eventually give us more musicians for our Feiseanna.

It is a part of NAFC's mandate to encourage and foster our heritage in dance and music and we hope this will continue.

Rules to enter the Scholarship Competitions can be found on the NAFC website

Treasurer's Report – Sharon Murphy

(Please see attached report for complete details)

We lost money for the Championships this year but much less than the previous year. The Championships are not a money maker, we are expected to lose money.

Convention Fees are now a part of the Feis Registration Fees

Music Scholarship awards less than last year because checks have not been carried over.

2016 Net Profit of \$19,000

2017 Lost \$10,000 (First year Championships done without a Feis)

2018 lost on the Belts

Need to ask more advertisers and sponsorships to boost the revenue for the Championships

Michael Fitzpatrick – How much cash do we have on hand?

Sharon Murphy - As of Sept. 30 – \$90,528.00

Michael Fitzpatrick - How long would that last if we lose every year?

Sharon Murphy - We have lost approx. \$10,000.00. Therefore, if we continue at a loss of \$10,000.00 per year, we would have about 7 years.

Sean Kilcoyne - What is the Fiscal year?

Sharon Murphy - It is now a Calendar Year

Audit will be done at the end of the convention

Motion to accept the Treasurer's Report: Kerry Kelly Oster

Seconded: Sandi Asazawa

Motion: Carried

Registrar's Report - Donna Genthe

(Please see attached for Complete Report)

Donna reported on the status and approvals from the years 2017, 2018 and 2019 in both Canada and the U.S.

Total approved for the last 3 years are fairly consistent.

May, June and September are very active months.

Question: Brian Moran – Is there a registration deadline.

Answer: Emails were sent out to advise about registration. Within 2 months after your Feis is completed, Donna indicated that she needs the report along with a Feis Registration for the following Feis event.

Example: 2018 Feis report within the 2 months of completion along with the Feis request for 2020.

You should also send your 2018 report to your Regional Representative.

New format i.e.: email with a password online registration for the Feis report making it easier for everyone to get their reports in on time.

Megan Hickey– A suggestion that would be helpful is to have available of who has a reserved date or change date to have access to the schedule. Donna wants to make that available for members and parents

Pat Short – could you clarify that the deadline for the Feis report entered and next year application is in 2 months after your Feis and not 3 months as it used to be.

Question: Cindy Schuler: What is the deadline if you want to pay a late fee? And if you are willing to pay this late fee does that not cancel the idea that there is a deadline in the first place.

Answer: Donna indicated that she is working on establishing a procedure of extended deadlines with late fees attached. As she mentioned, passing a deadline and paying a late fee will not necessarily give them the date they want because of others who registered on time may have chosen those particular dates.

Get reports in and cc Donna within the 2 months to avoid late fees and if you don't know your venue put an estimate on your request

Question: James Early: Can we do catch up - doing 2 reports i.e.: 2017 and 2018

Answer: Yes, you can.

Question: Alison Reaney Brown: Is the late fee enough if its \$100 a month but you wait 6 months and still only pay \$100 it doesn't seem right. Double fees will give them more an incentive to decide to get the report in and the registration in on time.

Answer: Donna indicated that a decision of that nature couldn't be made at this time but would look into the matter.

Question: Patrick Short: For those who want to run a Feis but indicate venue to be determined, is there any timeline which they must give notice of their venue?

Answer: Donna called upon Shannon, the previous Registrar, to answer this question. Shannon - Technically you need to know 6 weeks before the Feis along with your permit and advise of the venue. At this time, we don't have the manpower to monitor that so perhaps the regional reps could probably take that on to have more control on this

Comment: Patrick Short. We should know the exact venue location well in advance because of the distance that could be between venue to venue.

Example: A Feis being held in Ste. Anne de Bellevue, Québec is 200 miles from Syracuse, N.Y. However, if a Feis is registered for Northern Syracuse it will be less than 200 miles. Therefore, we need to know the Venues of the Feis well before 6 weeks of the event.

Comment: Donna Genthe, Registrar recapped that they have up to 6 months for being late or they lose their date. It is stated in the by-laws they need to indicate the distance of their venue because we need to respect the 200-mile radius.

Donna explained that if you have a venue indicated she assumes that this is the venue you will be using and she verifies the 200 miles. If you change venue you must let Donna know because she must verify its distance to other Feiseanna and the impact it may have on them. Donna stated please, do not book a venue until your date has been approved.

Comment: Sandi Asazawa indicated that the Regional Representatives could do more to relieve the Registrar. It would be useful to have a list of responsibilities that are expected of a Regional Representatives which would give us a guideline of what is needed to be done.

Perhaps we can have the feis chairperson's contact information so that we can contact that person whenever we have questions that need to be answered

Donna continued to explain the dates: Permanent date changes and temporary for new Feis. Date changes are a bit of an issue. Donna continued with the status of these date changes: (Please see attached report for complete stats)

37 date changes - 2017

33 date changes - 2018

24 date changes - 2019

New Feis: 26 - 2017

22 - 2018

9 - 2019

Total not registered for 2019 is: 120 have reserved dates but not registered

You will see the new Feis Report form to Register along with phone number very soon.

REGIONAL REPORTS

Mid-Atlantic – Bernadette Broderick

(Please see attached report for full details)

Bernadette indicated that they have 13 back to back Feiseanna in their region. Highlight was 75 musicians for the Music Competition this year.

Challenges: Did not reach their caps and numbers of dancers are decreasing, attendance is down. Some Feiseanna are barely keeping afloat. Finding volunteers are down.

Must send Feis contracts to adjudicators ahead of the event so to avoid conflict with agreements made with adjudicators.

Observations: Back to back Feiseanna are a big impact on Feis attendance.

New England – Helen O’Dwyer Not in attendance

Eastern Canada – Mary Bryan

Feiseanna in Eastern Canada is doing well. The number of Feiseanna is slowly increasing with a new feis yet to be held in 2018.

Our numbers hover around the 300 and up to the 400 mark so profit margins are not thriving well at all.

We are trying to encourage participation and it is seemingly working just as long as we offer no late fee. This as you know does hurt our bottom line.

We will persevere offering new competitions to encourage our dancers to enter and participate.

We remain a small but successful region as far as our dancers are concerned. We do have many medal and trophy holders from the various big-name competitions.

Southern Region – Nancy Logue

2018 a great year for the Southern. However only 40% reports were sent in for 2018.

2017 – 14 new Feiseanna

We had so many we had to pull back, because of back to back in a region

Most registered Feis state: 12 Texas

A Special Feis was held in Florida for Cara’s memory who passed away in the Parkland massacre.

Some of the successes: Culturally and financially. Attendance to 100’s to 900 at the various Feis. Back to back Feiseanna is not financially feasible. To increase numbers many Feiseanna are starting casual dress Feis. Difficult to get venues requiring date changes making it difficult to plan their events.

Mid-America – Sandy Asazawa

The MidAmerica region had a total of 60 Feiseanna in 2018, six of which are still to take place later this year. It was a year of many date changes in the region, 11 temporary date changes and 5 permanent ones. There were four new Feiseanna added to the MidAmerica region, The Academy Feis, Father’s Day Feis, Heart of America Feis and the Celtic Junction Feis, which is grades only.

There was some confusion this year as to what year feis reports were to be submitted. I only received 10 2017 reports with a scattering of 2018 reports. There also appeared to be a problem with the feis report form online as to allowing the check box for “financial success” to be filled in. Subsequently, a third of the reports that I did receive had left this box blank. Because of this issue, I feel that it is impossible for form any real consensus for how the year was in general. I did not receive any reports stating that the year had not been a financial success, and seven of the reports said yes to the question. A couple of reports stated that having back to back Feiseanna seemed to help improve the number of dancers. There were no significant problems reported other than Buckeye Feis mentioning that they had a man Facetimeing and using profanity during the feis, but he apparently left on his own before security was called.

I personally attended four MidAmerican Feiseanna this year, including North Coast Feis, which I help to run. I volunteered on a Champ stage at the other three, Akron, Cleveland and Detroit. All four ran well with no significant issues. All reported that the number of grades dancers have diminished each year.

I responded to two pieces of communication in the last year, one person asking if they could enter a music competition while on ban from dancing-the answer is yes, and another adult dancer asking if beginner adults had to dance beginner speeds in competition. I advised her that beginner speeds are the same for all dancers.

Question: James Early: Can you explain to me the process of the grades Feis run in Minnesota.

Answer All syllabus must be approved by the region not by the NAFC.

Comment: Russell Beaton stated, the current rules are, you send an application for an alternate format and explain why. If the region approves then you fill out the form and send it to Donna. It's an option and it is available, but the process must be approved by your region before submitted to Donna.

Lori Seeman read in the By-laws that this would be a one-time approval and must be requested on a yearly basis.

Question: Is a “Blackout” considered an alternative Feis?

Answer: No.

Comment: Gary Brown: This is the first time we had to dip into our reserve after 10 years. Offered as a suggestion to Donna as part of the Feis report that we highlight the impact we make on families and charity to a family or to organizations. Donna responded by saying that the finances of an event are not directed on the report she requires.

Comment: Helen Gannon suggested to everyone that they can apply to their state for their Sales Tax exemption form 5013C, which would help immensely in saving taxes on travelling costs i.e.: hotels

Western Canada – Nora Pickett – Not in attendance

President, Lori Seeman stated that Nora did send a brief report.

Jan. 19/20 - West Coast Championships, hosted by Penk-O'Donnell School
Feis Feedback - None provided

January 26/27 - Western Canadian Winter Championships, hosted by Blakey-O'Brien + TDL Irish Dance Society, Calgary Hyatt Downtown, Calgary, Alberta

Feis Feedback - None provided

Feb 2/3 - The Rince ISSSS Feis, hosted by The Knock School, Edmonton, Alberta - Feis Feedback - None provided

February 9th - Salish Sea Feis, hosted by O'Brien School of Irish Dance, Mary Winspear Centre, Sidney, BC

Feis Feedback - All went well! Much better than 2016 because it snowed hard, judges were late, done competitors couldn't travel, etc. Overall organization was much better!

February 23/24 - Van Eire Feis, Hosted by the Van Eire Traditional Irish Dance Assn, Surrey, BC

Feis Feedback - None provided

March 2/3 - Possak Hampshire Feis, hosted by The Possak Hampshire School of Irish Dance, Calgary, Alberta

Feis Feedback - None provided

April 6/7 - E.I.D.A Spring Feis in the West, hosted by The Mattierin School of Irish Dance, Edmonton, Alberta

Feis Feedback - None provided

May 18/19 - Brady Academy Spring Feis, Hosted by The Brady Academy, Edmonton, Alberta

Feis Feedback - None provided

May 21st - Victoria Highland Games Feis, Hosted by the Victoria School of Irish Dance, Victoria, BC,

Feis Feedback - None provided

June 1/2 - Western Canadian Open Feis, hosted by The Houston Academy of Irish Dance & Irwin School of Irish Dance, Calgary, Alberta

Feis Feedback - None provided

June 15/16 - Beautiful British Columbia Feis, hosted by The Stewart School of Irish Dance, Surrey, B.C.

Feis Feedback - None provided

Oct 11-13 - Casey-O'Loughlin Championships, Hyatt Regency, Calgary, Alberta

Feis Feedback - None provided

October 19th - Cairdeas (Friendship) Feis, hosted by The Sionnaine Irish Dance Academy & The De Danaan School of Irish Dance, Collingwood School, West Vancouver, BC

Feis Feedback -

- **Venue perfect**
- **very organized except a judge was ill in morning so Champ stage had to start & stop lots & went behind but caught up by 2pm.**
- **Fun factor high**
- **Stress low with judges & volunteers dressing up in Halloween costumes!**
- **Profits have increased steadily over last 3 years**
- **Running own concession with hired chef + baked goods given was more work but more profitable & healthier! Positive feedback.**
- **Parking could be better.**

Western U.S. - Geraldine Murray

61 registered for 2018

All must have approval from our Board before sent to Donna for registration

Created sub regions, 4

Syllabus must be approved by our Board Members before you can open up registration.

Manage your entries from 1st and 2nd day so that you don't lose in competitions. Examples: Adults on 1-day and groups the next day.

Avg. competitors 300 to 400 hundred while California had 500 hundred.

We adjust the business models to fit the number of dancers we have.

We have more competitors but less beginners. We need to find creative ways of getting beginners.

Question: Helen Gannon: Are there a lot of representation from the 61 Feiseanna?

Answer: No there is not.

Hall of Fame – Edward Hansberry

3 candidates were nominated:

Cyril McNiff was awarded at the Catskills Feis

Carl & Eileen Petri was awarded at the Petri Feis

Michael Farrell reported on the event.

Edward thanked Michael Farrell and his wife Jeannie for all their support.

He also thanked Mary Woods as well for all the set-up and frames.

Total cost \$577.80

IDTANA – Russell Beaton, President of IDTANA

(Please see attached report for full details)

Past 12 months have been very active. In Europe we brought back 6 solo Championships and 5 Junior Championships. We continue to improve our new website. We do online scheduling. Russell reported on various North American championships, new Board selection and representatives. Social Media is up and running.

NAFC – Jerilyn Hagan – Chairperson of the Board

2018 has been quiet in the way of problems. NAFC tries to promote Irish culture in dance music, and even culinary events.

We must have all information correct and on time to make the proper decisions to try and please everyone and that it is at the best interest of the children. We must think outside of the box, because times are changing and we need to change with it to stay alive even if it means painful decisions must be made.

An Coimisiun – Grainne Ni Chonchubhair for Francis Curley, Chairperson

Día dhaoibh a cháirde go léir. Is mór an onóir dom bheith anseo ar son An Coimisiún agus Cathaoirleach, Francis Curley.

Good afternoon everybody. I am delighted to be here today representing An Coimisiún and deputizing for the Chairperson Francis Curley.

Firstly, I wish to commend and congratulate the Board members of the NAFC on the wonderful work they continue to do in upholding and spreading Irish culture on this vast continent. In particular I would like to pay tribute to President. Lori Seeman, as she comes to the end of her 4-year cycle in that particular position. Go raibh míle maith agut Lori as ucht na ceithre bliana mar Uachtarán. I have no doubt the experience you gained in the position will be a huge asset to the incoming President and the Board in general.

I would also like to acknowledge all members of the Board and the committees within who do sterling work in their specific areas. I am sure you will not mind if I mention Pat Watkins on the “Belt” competitions which continue to grow in numbers and to congratulate her and her committee on the successful introduction of céilí competitions in honor of the late Peter Smith R.I.P. which introduces a whole new group of dancers to this prestigious event.

Secondly, to all you Feis organisers and your cohort of volunteers, comhghairdeas agus míle buíochas for your never-ending promotion of Irish culture not only among the Irish diaspora but also among the many dancers from different ethnic backgrounds who have gotten involved in our art form. In a personal capacity it continues to delight me that so many of your Feiseanna incorporate competitions for other aspects of our Irish culture namely, music, brown bread making etc.

An Coimisiún runs two events in the year, Oireachtas na hÉireann (All Ireland Championships) and Oireachtas na Cruinne (World Championships.)

In 2018 Oireachtas na hÉireann returned, after a number of years, to its traditional date in February. The change of date and the venue in Killarney made for a much more successful event with many dancers from North America participating. 2018 had been declared “Bliain na Gaeilge” by Conradh na Gaeilge. An Coimisiún made a huge effort to conduct the business of the event in Irish and involved the dancers by requesting that they learn their number and the name of their set dance in Irish. While they lined up side stage, they were then encouraged to engage with the stage steward using their “cúpla focail”. I am delighted to say that most dancers entered into the spirit of the occasion with some of the overseas children putting the Irish children to shame with their efforts!

Oireachtas na Cruinne 2018 took place in the renowned concert hall in Glasgow. Despite huge numbers of qualifiers, I think most people enjoyed the event very much.

The Oireachtas for 2019 will return to North America after the successful bid from Greensboro, North Carolina. Due to the reluctance of the majority of Coimisiún members to embrace a cut in the number of dancers qualifying in the different regions a new format will be

in place at the 2019 event with an extra qualifying round being incorporated into the different age groups.

As 2020 will be the 50th anniversary of Oireachtas na Cruinne I am delighted that it will return to the city where it all started taking place in the beautiful Dublin Conference Centre.

There is far more to the work of An Coimisiún than these two events. As you all know An Coimisiún is a voluntary body and with the huge advances in technology, the social issues of the day must be addressed with policies in child protection, data protection etc. in place and being continually updated.

The memberships of the organization continue to grow. 2017 saw a greater number than normal of examinations for prospective teachers and adjudicators. This demand was due to a change in criteria for teacher examinations which came into effect on 1st January of this year. The exams took place in all corners of the world with the first successful ADCRG emerging from South America.

Worldwide, Irish dance appears to be on an upward trajectory and your contribution as Feis organisers continues to contribute in no small way to its growth, go raibh míle maith agaibh go léir.

Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Eireann – Helen Gannon

Our 2018 focus was on Blian na N'OG (the year of the youth). Our 2019 focus will be on Membership.

The World Championships, Fleadh Cheoil Na hÉireann, were held in Drogheda in August 2018. Numbers in Scoil Eigse were down from the previous year. Distance between venues was a problem. The 2019 Fleadh is already assigned to Drogheda.

I have been appointed as Ceannaire of the Coiste Rince (rules dealing with dancing). All Commission dancers are welcome to compete at the All Ireland, something that is often misunderstood. Qualification in Ceili and set dancing is awarded to 1st and 2nd place winners at provincial fleadhanna.

NAFC Music Scholarship, I would like to congratulate Anne Gervin for her patience and tenacity in continuing to promote the Music Scholarship. This is indeed a wonderful effort on the road to providing competent Feis Musicians. One of our previous winners of the Music Scholarship will be playing her first feis this weekend. We are hopeful for a good report. The road ahead is tough but well worth the effort and I thank the NAFC for their consideration in this area of need.

The Midwest Fleadh Cheoil will be held in Chicago in 2019 on April 26, 27 28. The Mid-Atlantic Fleadh will be held in Parsippany June 7, 8, 9, 2019. The All Ireland will be held in Drogheda on August 16, 17, 18, 2019. North American dancers must qualify at one of the two North American Fleadheanna.

The department of Foreign affairs has granted Comhaltas North America an increase in funding for the coming year from 40,000 Euros to 55,000 Euros. These funds are eligible to branches for small projects. If you have a branch of Comhaltas in your area this is very worthwhile to look into.

I would to continue to solicit more education for our dancers about the Country of their art form. I have become very aware of the lack of respect for the Irish National Anthem where I see families walking around and dancers unaware of the significance of what is being either played or sung at Feiseanna. I am including in my report the Irish National Anthem. If it would be possible to bring some interest in our dancing Community.

Elections - John Glenn

President 2 years of office – 4 years consecutive limit

Duties: Preside at all Executive Meetings, enforce laws and appoint Regional Representative

Vice President 2 years of office – 4 years consecutive limit

Duties: To assist the championship program book

Vice President at Large: Non-renewable 3-year term – Nominated on the Floor

Duties: Assist with the Hall of Fame and have attended the last 5 Conventions

Treasurer: 2 years of office – 4 years consecutive limit

Background in recording

President:

- Nomination was sent for President: **Jim Graven**
- Nominated by Pittsburgh Feis – Kathy Yates
- From the floor: Mary Bryan, nominated - Sean Kilcoin
- Mr. Kilcoin respectively declined the nomination
- Ed Hansberry made the motion to close the nomination

Motion: Carried

The recording secretary to cast 1 vote for **James Graven to be President**

Vice President:

- 1 nomination from NAFC Board: **Mary Kemock**
- Mary Bryan nominated Sean Kilcoin for Vice President
- Sean Kilcoin declined this nomination
- Kerry Kelly Oster made the motion to close the nomination.

Motion: Carried

The recording secretary to cast 1 vote for **Mary Kemock to be Vice President**

Vice President at Large

- Mary Bryan nominated Sean Kilcoin as Vice President at Large
- Mary Kemock nominated Noreen Halley as Vice President at Large
- Suzanne Fuller nominated Jeanne Farrell as Vice President at Large
- Patricia Watkins nominated Nancy Logue as Vice President at Large
- Beth Motta nominated Sandy Asazawa as Vice President at Large
- Helen Gannon made a motion to close the nomination

Motion: Carried

Each nominee spoke about themselves and why they feel they could fulfill the position of Vice President at Large

Each Feis has 1 vote.

Helen Gannon asked: Does the Board also have a vote? Answer: Yes

- **Sean Kilcoyne** - Chair of the Detroit Int Feis looks forward to working in any capacity.
- **Jeanne Farrell** - Eastern Feis for many years and the Catskills Feis and would be honored to be V.P at Large
- **Noreen Halley** - Active for 12 years and is President of the Cleveland Feis
- **Nancy Logue** -She is the Southern Region representative. She would be glad to be on the Board and represent the Southern Region, and on several boards in Atlanta.
- **Sandy Asazawa** – MidAmerican NAFC Regional Rep, North Coast Feis in Cleveland. Has been here for 7 years and for the last 2 years has taken the minutes for the NAFC and she would be humbled to be voted as Vice President at Large

Jeanne Farrell was voted as Vice President at Large

Treasurer

- Patricia Dwyer nominated and Joan Preece seconded Cindy Schuler as Treasurer.
- No other nominations were made.
- Ed Hansberry made a motion for nomination closed

Motion: Carried

The recording secretary to cast 1 vote for **Cindy Schuler as Treasurer**

Motions

Motion from Sean Kilcoin to put forth the following changes

- Effective immediately: no new FEISEANNA shall be registered by the NAFC

- Effective immediately: no permanent date changes nor any additional dates for existing Feiseanna shall be approved by the NAFC
- Effective immediately: no temporary date changes for any FEIS shall be approved by the NAFC
- The NAFC shall plan for and host its championship events to avoid a financial loss
- The 2018 and future FEIS reports shall require information on multiple occurrences of the same competitions (e.g., 2nd chance competitions)
- The fee for late registration of existing Feiseanna shall be set to twice the fee for timely registration

Patrick Short stated that no discussion for these motions until a 2nd motion is agreed upon.

James Early: Motions need to be brought to the NAFC prior to the convention.

Jeri Hagan agrees with this because of the contract NAFC has with the other 2 governing bodies

Move to table the motions

Moved by Michael Fitzpatrick

Motion: Carried

Ryan Carroll concurred with Jimmy that these motions should have been brought in before but can and should be discussed under New Business to get a feel of what other people in the room think of these motions before they are discussed with the three governing bodies.

Old Business – No old business.

New Business

Nora Smith asked the question: Do we have any applicants this year for the Hall of Fame?

Answer: No

Nelson Martin: Suggested for an Adult competitors committee be formed to look at ways to promote in getting more adults interested in competing. This would help to get the children of these adults involved. The Mid-Atlantic Region will be holding a 3 round Adult Championship as well the Southern Region. This is good for vendors, teachers, etc. When you hold this at a Regional Level, you will see more participation because you are offering adult competitions. Our numbers have grown from 3 to 11 competitions and we have had wonderful feedback

Suzanne Fuller: Indicated that they had 50 in the adult championships. We would like to renew the interest of adults in Irish dancing and to be in the Feiseanna and in the schools

Russell Beaton: This encourages a completely different market that we are not reaching out to. Russell indicated that he has adjudicated an adult championship and said it was a most wonderful competition. Sincere, involved and very supportive. It's really important to look at this very specialized group

Geraldine Murray: We have to split our groups for under 40 and over 40

Sandi Asazawa: Other than the fact that you don't want to put young dancers with the adults, what are the other objections?

Noreen Halley: I think the only concern is the child safety and a safe environment careful of dressing and changing around children as an example.

Michael Fitzpatrick: As a member, a musician, examiner, I see competition sizes shrinking. Feis today in New England are top heavy. Feiseanna are extending their registration later and later so they can get their numbers up. Other points to consider are if we are going to ask musicians and adjudicators to make it to sizeable Feis we must look at raising the rates for these musicians and adjudicators the 9 or 10 hours is extremely long. Consider the first 1 hour of over-time to be \$100.00 and every hour after that \$50.00

Patrick Short: Musicians work very hard at a FEIS. We have to pay what the IDTANA pay and all musicians are to be paid the same. The individual FEIS committee can negotiate with the musicians.

Lori Seeman: Indicated that adjudicators have contracts musicians do not. That would be something to think about as we move forward.

Jeri Hagan: Musicians are not formally organized. A separate contract should be made up for musicians.

Russell Beaton: When we look at the tri-partite agreement all of this will be up for review.

Kerry Kelly Oster: An adjudicator is given \$400 and musicians get \$300 does not seem fair. She agrees that overtime is not being compensated.

James Early: Noticed in the last couple of years that the pay scale of musicians did not seem fair and need to be revisited. Some who finished at 1 or 1:30 p.m. were paid the same as a musician that had to stay until 6.

James Graven: There is also the tendency for a musician to play for more stages than just 1 because the Feis is trying to save money. The musicians need breaks.

Megan Hickey: Plan for your timing and scheduling to keep in the 8-hour day.

Ryan Carroll: Depending where you live is a problem as well getting the availability of musicians.

James Early: There is a Feis next week in Oklahoma. As of yesterday, they still did not have a musician.

2019 Convention voted on at the 2017 Convention

Ft. Lauderdale, October 18-20, 2019

Four miles from Airport near the Intercoastal Waters

Site location for 2020 is Arizona an alternate that Michael Farrell has put in for is Albany, N.Y.

The Board took this opportunity to thank Lori for her work as President and Presented her with a Plaque.

Lori thanked the Board in particular Sharon Murphy the outgoing Treasurer and Michael Ferrell the outgoing Vice President At Large, for their support during her tenure. She also congratulated and welcomed the new President, Mr. Jim Graven.

Motion to adjourn the meeting: – Suzanne Fuller

Seconded by: Ed Hansberry at 15:35p.m.

Motion: Carried

In Attendance: Saturday October 20, 2018 – TOTAL OF 80**Names are listed in accordance to the sign-in sheets**

Asazawa, Sandi	North Coast Feis
Grainne Ni Chonchubhair	C.L.R.G.
Beaton, Russell	I.D.T.A.N.A.
Blake, Thomas	NAFC Board of Directors
Brown, Alison R.	Golden Horseshoe Feis
Brown, Gary	Golden Horseshoe Feis
Broderick, Bernadette	M.A.R., NAFC MidAtlantic Regional Rep
Broderick, John	M.A.R.
Bryan, Mary	Eastern Cdn. NAFC Rep (Greater Niagara Feis)
Buck, Teresa	NAFC Secretary
Carroll, Ryan	Oakville
Cronin, Jennie	
Dalton, Kevin	May Duffy Mem. Feis
Dayringer, Shannon	NAFC Media Liaison
Dickie, Tiffany	New Feis
Doyle, Eileen	Forest City
Dupuis, Bridget	Feis Lunasa ICC
Dupuis, Michael	Feis Lunasa at ICC
Dwyer, Patricia	NAFC Board of Directors
Early, James	New Jersey
Farrell, Jeanne	East Durham
Farrell, Michael	Catskills, NAFC Vice President At Large
Fitzpatrick, Michael	Greene O'Leary
Franzese, Bradley	May Duffy Mem. Feis
Fuller, Suzanne	O'Rourke Feis
Gannon, Helen	Comhaltas Delegate
Gaughen, Ann	S.L.I.A.
Genthe, Donna	NAFC Registrar, Heritage Irish Dance Co.
Gervin, Anne	Board of Directors
Gervin, Tom	NAFC Sgt. At Arms
Glynn, John	NAFC Board of Directors
Graven, Isabella	Pittsburgh H. Feis
Graven, James	NAFC (New) President
Hagan, Jeri	NAFC Chairperson of the Board of Directors
Halley, Noreen	Cleveland
Hansberry, Ed	NAFC Vice Chairman of the Board of Directors
Henry, Justin	Clann nan Gael (Summer Feis)
Henry, Kate	Clann nan Gael (Summer Feis)
Hickey, John	Bob Gabor, CNY
Hickey, Megan	Bob Gabor, CNY
Hogan, Catherine	U.I.C. & FLYNN
Izza (Katie Roper)	
Johnson, Tim	New Feis
Kemock, Mary	NAFC Vice President
Kilcoin, Sean	Detroit International Feis
Kilmartin, Sylvia	Feis Ville Marie
Longobardi, Justin	Peach State Feis

Lynne Mark	Guest
Martin, Nelson	Rose & Shamrock
McGough, Meagan	McGough Feis
Moran, Brian P.	May Duffy Mem. Feis
Moccio, Dodi	Greater Niagara Feis
Motta, Beth	North Coast Feis
Murphy, Sharon	Treasurer – NFCA
Murray, Geraldine	Portland Feis, NAFC Western Regional Rep
Oster, Karyn K.	Putnam Feis
Oster, Kerry Kelly	ADCRG, BG
Oswald, Robert	Rochester Feis
Oswald, Sandy	Flower city Feis
Preece, Joan	NAFC Board of Directors
Pujol, Esther	Rose & Shamrock
Rathsake, Megan	O'Rourke Feis
Roepke, Melanie	Cream City Feis
Rosendale, Patricia E.	New Jersey State Feis
Schuler, Cindy	St. Louis
Seeman, Lori	President – NFCA
Short, Pat	Board of Directors
Smith Nora A.	Irish Culture Club Delaware
Starr, Maura	Milwaukee
Thompson, Cathy	S.L.I.A.
Twardawsky, Kirsten	Greater Niagara Feis
Villareel, Brooke	Cream City Feis
Watkins, Patricia	NAFC Board of Directors
Woods, Dale	Hotlanta Feis
Woods, Mary	Rockland Co. Feis
Woods, Nancy L.	Feis Atlanta
Yates, David	West Virginia Feis
Yates, Kathy	West Virginia Feis
Young, Shauna	Guest
Zyken, Pamela	S.L.I.A.