

Australasian Bluegrass & Old Time Music Association Inc.

DATE: 18 June 2013	TIME: 8:00-11.00pm	LOCATION: Teleconference – Australia
ATTENDANCE:	(WM) Will Manovel – Chair, (LD) Lachlan Davidson – Deputy Chair, (GM) Gregory McGrath – Secretary, (BW) Blair Webb – Treasurer, (GB) Geoff Bridgeland, (HL) Helen Ludellen, (RB) Rebecca Bradbury	
APOLOGIES:	Nil	
PROTOCOLS:	Minutes of the previous meeting held on 14 th May 2013 were confirmed.	

1. Financial Analysis (costs & revenues required to run a music festival in Harrietville in 2013)

WM presented (and explained the philosophy and assumptions underlying) a detailed financial analysis of the real and forecasted costs and revenues associated with running a music festival at Harrietville. WM thanked BW & LD for their detailed data research in preparing the analysis. The analysis will be presented to the Harrietville community as a matter of engagement, and to build mutual trust, responsibility, and contribution towards a sustainable future event.

General discussion ensued:

WM has emailed to Melanie Tekin of the Alpine Shire inviting it's representatives to attend the forthcoming community & business stakeholder engagement meeting in Harrietville on Sat 29 June 2013.

ABOTMA restated its commitment to pay every performing musician (even if only \$1 in this unfunded year).

To reduce infrastructure costs, the analysis assumes we will not use marquees nor make use of public spaces in 2013. Noted that although Alpine Shire donates a marquee, the costs of delivery and set up may be prohibitive. Also, we are only obliged to provide portable toilets if using public spaces, therefore this cost may not be necessary in 2013. HL said Feathertop has suggested they may not have enough toilets for 3-500 people.

Sound engineer cost = hire of PA system + operator fee (could be reduced by bands donating the use of their PA's). LD looking into sound management issues. Need operators familiar with bluegrass and acoustic string band music.

John Werner has offered to manage the program at Snowline Hotel, for whatever we wish to book there, and help organize chalkboard concerts as well. Can supply a PA free of charge, but need a sound engineer to operate it for the weekend.

Jim Golding has offered to run Mountainview Rec Hall. Although we assume Coolgrass members will provide PA, lights, etc. this should be confirmed with Jim, Angus, and Bruce.

JamGrass has declined to host Harrietville Hotel Motel as a venue because it is already caught up with Melb & Sydney JamGrass events. Yet to work out whether this venue will be used or who could manage it on behalf of the festival committee.

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Fencing cost has been excluded, on the basis that it doesn't reflect the inclusive approach of ABOTMA. With a philosophy of inclusiveness and building goodwill, ABOTMA is prepared to risk non-payers approaching performances, as we feel this number will be reduced. Also, it may be more inviting for unintentional attendees to be welcomed and then invited to purchase a ticket. In the past, fencing may have led to people staying in the caravan park because they haven't felt welcomed.

The analysis forecasts the major cost to be the transport and accommodation of musicians.

2013 MountainGrass preliminary budget conservative estimate is \$59,002, without including 'in-kind' donation of time (mostly many hours of early project establishment and management). These are yet to be calculated but estimated at approx. \$40,000. Funding for this will need to be raised from multiple streams, ABOTMA memberships, festival ticket sales, public grant funding, vendors stall fees, instrument makers fees, merchandise, private donations and seed loans.

All musicians/bands need to pre-organise their own transport, accommodation, and meals. Whilst the Steering Committee intends to cover some of these costs, where funds permit, the committee will not be involved in making any accommodation bookings for bands.

In deciding which bands it can fund, the committee actively differentiates between professional bands and amateur bands. Both will be supported as much as funds permit, but there is recognition that professional musicians rely on fees for income, but amateurs do not, and that new bands and young musicians need to be supported.

Possible festival revenue streams were reviewed. At present, preliminary MountainGrass 2013 revenue estimated at \$45,250, representing a net loss. Contingency plans rely on halving the number of performers who may be funded, but still providing venues for unfunded performers.

Budget refinement suggestions:

In-kind support to be included in the budget for time donated by ABOTMA Committee members. Add in any free services offered. Festival director, website, and any bands performing for free, are also to be included as in-kind support, and therefore part of estimated revenue stream.

RB will contact Bendigo Community Bank regarding sponsorship or donation, and talk to the Alpine Shire about allocating some bush fire relief funds towards the event (which attracts tourism and revenue), as Harrietville hasn't received any relief funds yet.

2. Discussion & resolutions re: size, performers, festival philosophy and approach

LD presented a list of 34 possible performers, and provided background information on a suggested mix of bands, reasons for picking different performers, mixing local and overseas acts, new and old, and other factors influencing decisions about the artistic and musical flavor of MountainGrass.

General discussion regarding possible musicians/artists/bands for 2013, and what we wish the flavour of the festival to be. Thirty-one (31) bluegrass bands formally applied through the website, but no Old-Time bands applied. Recognition that we need to fill the 18-35 age gap. Noted that we need to support and welcome younger people.



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A lack of NSW performer applicants was noted and a strong wave of VIC bands. Discussion of possible reasons ensued. Andrew Clermont may help Strezlecki Stringbusters with sound engineering. Is he considering performing? LD will follow up chat with him.

Discussion regarding what ticket buyers would get for their money, and what would represent value for money, in establishing ticket costs. Confirmed that ABOTMA members would get a significant discount on festival tickets, in order to encourage membership base and support.

RB knows the Patuxent Partners, and Nate Leath; they are also keen to come back. Is it too late now to organize other USA acts? Keep in mind for next year, when we are better funded?

Old Time music needs to be more represented on the lineup. GB & BW agree Don Rigsby would be a great inclusion and draw card, and the committee supported LD's suggestion that he should be booked as soon as possible. Mustered Courage & Quarry Mountain Dead Rats could host a showcase at the Harrietville Hotel Motel.

Resolutions - the following resolutions were made on the basis of the financial analysis and forward estimates, as well as the committee's consideration of the artistic flavor proposed for MountainGrass 2013:

WM put forward the resolution that ABOTMA appoints Lachlan Davidson as 'Artistic Director' for the 2013 MountainGrass festival. RB seconded the resolution. Carried.

ABOTMA offered LD the position of Artistic Director for MountainGrass 2013.

LD accepted the appointment.

LD will put together a performer agreement for WM to check over, and use it to commence formally booking bands. Final decisions about specific remuneration to support musicians will be subject to raising sufficient funds.

WM put forward the resolution that ABOTMA commits to a budget of between \$45-60,000 (depending on public grant and community support) for MountainGrass 2013. GM seconded the resolution. Carried.

GM put forward the resolution that ABOTMA approve a budget to nominally allocate up to \$32,000 towards musician costs/fees for MountainGrass 2013 (provided sufficient funds are raised). BW seconded the resolution. Carried.

RB put forward the resolution that (irrelative of funding) all bands/performers chosen at the Artistic Directors discretion should be given a performance slot at MountainGrass 2013. HL seconded the resolution. Carried.

Note: To date, all performers that have formally applied, are to be confirmed to perform. After confirmation by each of the 31 bands to date, they will be advertised on the festival website.



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3. Association matters

a. Bank accounts

Second bank account setup for MountainGrass Festival separate from ABOTMA, awaiting WM to draft Trust Deed and WM and GM to provide sample electronic signatures. WM will coordinate with BW and GM before next committee meeting.

ABN should now be noted on the ABOTMA Inc website.

b. Communication

Website: WM suggested the two websites ABOTMA & MountainGrass be placed under a single domain address in order to save future maintenance costs, and encourage membership of ABOTMA. GM said the MountainGrass domain name is registered for two years. The committee agreed to keep the two sites separate at this point, but reconsider at a later date. It was noted that the MountainGrass festival site currently directs people to the ABOTMA site to join as a member in order to obtain festival tickets which will be discounted for ABOTMA members.

WM asked Angela Whitehead whether she could have a finalised logo by the end of this week. GM can get up new logo graphics fairly quickly. Agreed that GM & LD would decide on final logo design.

Date to finalise logo design, website, and artist lineup decided to be 5 July 2013, as after this, we need to get on with deciding ticket pricing asap, fund-raising and organizing the festival.

Action: LD to coordinate with WM and BW re final artist line-up and funding. GM to coordinate with Angela Whitehead re logo design. WM to coordinate with all Committee final decisions re festival ticket pricing, so this can be decided at or before the next Committee meeting, and placed on the website asap.

Action: LD, WM, GM to coordinate a press release once both artist line-up and festival ticket pricing are finalized, planned for next committee meeting in early July.

Action: BW, GB, LD, and WM to travel to Harrierville asap (now known to be Sat 29 June 2013), to meet with local community leaders, business reps, and Alpine Shire reps, to present the financial analysis, 2013 budget, and obtain support and engagement towards a sustainable 5 year festival plan.

4. MountainGrass matters

a. Funds

- ABOTMA memberships & festival ticket sales cannot commence until the website is finalized, artist line-up decided and advertised, and festival ticket prices set. This needs to be completed by or at the next Committee meeting.
- Shire event and funds application - HL is preparing event and marketing/advertising plan for submission to Alpine Shire council. WM suggested using budget figures from financial analysis. WM to update budget as discussed and forward to HL to include in grant application.



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WM can assist editing grant application and marketing plan, after return from Harrierville and before 9 July deadline. Meanwhile HL to continue working on this with RB. LD to send HL media plan to promote the festival.

- Sponsorship – RB to speak with Bendigo Bank, WM happy to support discussions.

b. Forward planning

- Performance venues/spaces – LD to sort and present at next committee meeting
- Workshops plan – GB to sort and discuss with WM at Harrierville business meeting
- Event insurance – WM and HL will coordinate to obtain from Folk Alliance (as previously discussed) once extent of festival is finalised and advertised – finalise at next Committee meeting, and pay if necessary. HL may refer to this insurance in Shire grant application if this is required.

5. Next meeting of steering committee

Yet to be confirmed but estimated for Sunday 7 or Tue 15 July 2013 at 8.00pm AEST.

6. Other business

- RB will talk to Bendigo Bank and co-ordinate with BW to consider moving banks or donation or providing an overdraft if we don't meet funding requirements for 2013 event.
- Fees, sponsors, and workshop venues - GB is developing a draft schedule to be carried to the next meeting.
- WM and LD are going to check out all available spaces in Harrierville for use during the event.
- GB will fly over and cover his flight costs to attend town meeting and to plan event sites.
- WM to fly to Albury and fund flights/car hire, to be reimbursed by ABOTMA. GB should also be reimbursed when funds allow.
- Hand bills for Redlands, Beechworth briefly mentioned. LD to discuss flyer design with Angela
- BW confirmed GM has now been reimbursed for \$247 for two conference calls. GM has agreed to hold other website build/maintenance costs until ABOTMA can pay them.
- Advertising costs and graphic designs to be reimbursed back to Angela once we have funds to allow it.
- RB is fully paid and is going to email her membership form to GM.

Meeting concluded at 10:55pm AEST

The next meeting of the Association's Executive shall be Sun 7 or Tue 15th July 2013 at 8:00pm AEST. WM to advise.

END OF MEETING MINUTES

I declare these minutes an accurate record of the matters discussed at this meeting, attended by me, and which may be confirmed at the next interim steering committee meeting.



14/5/2013

Will Manovel
President
Interim Steering Committee
Australasian Bluegrass & Old Time Music Association (Inc.)