



website: suzuki-flute-recorder.ca

email: suzukifluteandrecorder@gmail.com

telephone: 780-887-1421

mail: 162 Bonnie Doon Mall

PO Box 68178, Edmonton, AB, T6C 4E3

ESFRS Board Meeting: Thursday, January 12, 2023

In virtual attendance: Kathleen Schoen, Beth Gardner, Maggie Gaines, Christy Perry, Suzan Goodall, Kelly Komm (late arrival)

Meeting called to order at 6:40 pm by Kathleen Schoen.

Items for discussion and formal motion:

Kathleen had previously sent out a detailed email to the Board members outlining a possible change to the structure and purpose of the ESFRS. This information is attached. The purpose of tonight's meeting is to discuss any questions the Board members might have, and whether to pursue this possible change.

Motion by Kathleen to move ahead with the next step in this proposal for the ESFRS, seconded by Maggie.

Kathleen will now proceed with investigating these possibilities and report back to the Board within 4 weeks so that any changes are in place before the influx of spring enrolment.

A meeting to discuss next steps and findings is tentatively made for Feb. 9, 2023.

Meeting called to adjourn at 7:20pm

Original email from Kathleen Schoen:

I have been doing a lot of thinking - "visioning" some would call it - about the future.

I have a lot of information to process as I do this:

In my personal self employed business, and as music director of ESFRS: organizational and financial information from the music business course that I recently completed

In my work on the Suzuki Music/Musique Canada committee: information about organizational requirements for non profit and charitable organizations at national level

In my work as a Suzuki Teacher Trainer: information about restructuring that is happening in the Suzuki Association of the Americas, European Suzuki Association, and the International Suzuki Association

Looking at what is happening in the field of music instruction at the local, national, and international level, I am recommending that the Edmonton Suzuki Flute and Recorder Society make an adjustment to the Society's activities, as outlined below. This would provide more resources for individual teachers and students in professional development, scholarships, special events, and community outreach, and reduce resources spent on administration and large events.

Individual teachers can run their own private studios as affiliates of ESFRS, and deal directly with individual families regarding scheduling and content of lessons, group events and concerts.

ESFRS is trying to offer group events that are not well attended by the community we are trying to serve. Instead of trying to offer a few large events that are designed for everyone (and have poor attendance), individual teachers are in a better position to offer short term small scale group activities that fit the needs and schedules of the families that they work with, in the communities where they work. This will improve accessibility to program offerings, by providing a wider variety of options for participants without the cost of making each option big enough for everyone to attend. This also gives us greater flexibility during the return to in person instruction. Teachers can still cooperate to create larger events as needed.

Individual teachers can run their own private studios as affiliates of ESFRS, and set fees that correspond with their training, experience, and studio offerings.

I recently interviewed a local teacher with many years of experience, who had just completed Suzuki Unit 1 training. My intent was to invite her to join our group of teachers in ESFRS. But as we chatted about rates, schedules, the importance of group classes, and related studio business, I realized that there was absolutely no advantage to her joining ESFRS. She would have had to take a 13% cut in her hourly rate, and teach 6

hours less in the year. Becoming an affiliated studio would allow this teacher to become part of our community without having to change her studio operations.

Other teachers in ESFRS have also drawn the discrepancy between market rates and what ESFRS pays the teachers to my attention.

Unfortunately, this issue puts the Board of Directors into a conflict of interest situation. The parents have a vested interest in keeping fees low, and teachers have vested interest in having a sustainable income.

This is one of the reasons why operating a music school makes an organization ineligible to become a registered charity. It is actually more appropriate for a non profit society to provide support in the form of grants and scholarships than it is to operate a commercial enterprise.

ESFRS can offer financial support for both teachers and students through an application process.

Teachers can apply for professional development costs and financial support for larger projects that involve multiple teachers and bigger venues. Students can apply for scholarships. There could be fee subsidies available for students who are studying privately with one teacher but would benefit from a small class presented by a different teacher. Teachers could also apply for assistance to set up their own studios. This would be a very valuable form of mentorship for inexperienced teachers

ESFRS would not need to use so many resources on administration.

Individual teachers would be responsible for their own communication, scheduling, and fee collection with their studio families. Even before COVID, the teachers had been unable to use the facility rented by ESFRS for private lessons and were providing the teaching venues in their home studios. Liability insurance for individual home studios is much less than for a large organization. ESFRS could still provide insurance for larger events if needed.

ESFRS can use the accumulated reserve fund to facilitate this transition.

Funding for the Society can still be obtained through grants and membership fees. Individual affiliate studios can add an ESFRS membership portion to their fees and pass that on to ESFRS. Fundraising would also be an option if the Society was operating just as a non profit and not operating a commercial enterprise. This would also make more grants available to ESFRS, and open the doors to becoming registered charity if that was advantageous.

There is nothing in the ESFRS mandate or bylaws that would prevent this shift of focus in the Society's operations.

Available at this link for reference: <https://suzuki-flute-recorder.ca/about/administration/esfrs-meeting-minutes-bylaws/>

I welcome further discussion on these points, either individually or at the next Board meeting.